



Tilford Bach Society

Buxtehude, Biber & Bach

Vox Musica

Director: Michael Berman

with

Southbank Sinfonia Baroque

Director: Adrian Butterfield - violin

Rachel Rowntree – violin

Daniel Shilliday – viola

Lisa Bucknell – viola

Ruth Alford – cello

Nicola Barbagli- Oboe

Nathaniel Harrison-Bassoon

Alex McCartney - lute

David Gordon – organ/Harpsichord

26 April 2014

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Programme

Buxtehude

Cantata: Jesu, Meine Lebens leben

Biber

Sonata no. 8

from 'Tam aris quam aulis servientes'

J M Bach

Ach bleib bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ

Auf lasst uns den Herren loben

Countertenor: Tom Verney

Biber

Sonata no. 11

from 'Tam Aris Quam aulis servientes'

Buxtehude

Cantata: Der Herr ist mit mir

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J S Bach

Motet: Komm, Jesu, komm BWV229

Muffat

Sonata no. 4

J S Bach

Cantata: Aus der Tiefen, rufe ich, Herr, zu dir BWV 131

Tenor: Benedict Hymas, Bass David Rees-Jones

**We especially thank an anonymous sponsor for very generously
sponsoring the cost of this concert**

Dietrich Buxtehude was at the heart of an intense period of musical activity in the north German town of Lübeck, where he was organist and Werkmeister at the Marienkirche. His reputation was such that many musicians were attracted to Lübeck including J.S. Bach who made the 300km journey on foot at the age of 20 to hear the master. The chorale formed the basis of all music in the Lutheran Church and such was the imagination of the composers of the day that congregations stopped joining in the singing to listen to the performances. The motet became the cantata and eventually turned the Lutheran church into a concert hall. The two short cantatas **Der Herr ist mit mir** and **Jesu, meine Lebens Leben** are both marvellous examples of the elaboration of simple ideas and leave us in no doubt why the Lutheran congregation chose not to sing!

We move to the area around Arnstadt and Leipzig, home to the Bach family, many of whom were musicians and they provided the musical backdrop during J.S. Bach's formative years. **Johann Michael Bach** was J.S. Bach's father-in-law, an organist of Arnstadt church for over 50 years. The text of the choral and solo cantatas, **Gott bleib bei uns Herr Jesu Christ** and **Auf lasst uns den Herren loben**, in keeping with the period are concerned with the wretchedness of earth-life, mourning, the sinners' contrition and the praise and glorification of God. What is remarkable is the wonderful and deeply expressive music which finds equal expression in both instrumental and vocal parts, and which carries the works to great artistic heights.

Moving to **JSBach, Komm Jesu Komm** is one of six motets which represent the absolute summit of the motet form and indeed of Western polyphony. These are the only vocal works of Bach which have had an unbroken performance tradition at St. Thomas' in Leipzig. **Komm Jesu, komm** for double choir and continuo was written for the funeral of another composer's widow. It is the most "vocal" of all the motets, a sublime and moving portrait of a heart-felt desire to die.

The early Cantata '**Aus der Tiefe**' written in the Lutheran tradition, has five sections in perfect symmetry and a chorale melody throughout to which the congregation could relate. One feels that with the addition of oboe and bassoon, Bach is embarking on his cantata journey (224 in all) eager to explore all the possibilities. There is much that is outstanding in this beautiful cantata, and the 3rd section with its sense of longing stands out as one of Bach's sublime movements. His later works may be grander and more majestic but nothing speaks more directly to the heart.

The seriousness of the choral works is contrasted with the joyful instrumental music of Biber and Muffat. **Heinrich Ignaz von Biber** was a Bohemian violinist and composer of phenomenal talent who became Kappellmeister of the Salzburg Court in 1684. He wrote operas and large-scale sacred vocal music, but is best known for his remarkable string writing. The sonatas in **Tam aris quam aulis servientes** were made to measure for his patron Count Kuenburg; in specifying that the work was intended both "for the altar and for the court".

Georg Muffat was born in France, studied under Lully whilst still at school, then studied in Rome and worked in the courts of Vienna and Passau. He was appointed cathedral organist in Strasbourg, and in gratitude to his patron who allowed him a year's sabbatical to spend time with Corelli, he wrote **Armonico Tributo** a set of suites "for few or many instruments", in the Italian concerto grosso style. Muffat was a European born before his time who strove to bring countries closer together. "My profession is very far from the tumult of arms and from the reasons of state that cause them to be taken up. I occupy myself with notes, with words, and with sounds. I exercise myself in the study of a suite symphony when I mingle the world of France with that of the Germans and Italians not to incite war, but rather as a prelude to the harmony of nations ... and to amiable peace."

Vox Musica

Vox Musica is a London-based vocal ensemble with a special interest in baroque music. Vox Musica has previously performed Purcell's Dido & Aeneas in Edinburgh, Bach cantatas and concertos in Exeter and Wells cathedrals, Buxtehude, Biber and Monteverdi at the Chelsea Festival, Handel's Dixit Dominus in Belfast, the Mozart Requiem in Italy and the music of Rameau, Mondonville and Delalande at the London Handel Festival. Vox Musica also takes part in the Anghiari Festival in southern Tuscany and on several occasions the Valence Festival in Southern France.

The singers work with other well-known ensembles and many also undertake solo engagements. As individuals they have sung throughout the world and have appeared in many recordings.

Michael Berman is Music Director of Vox Musica, and Founder Chairman of Southbank Sinfonia. He was awarded a CBE in the New Year's Honours list.

<i>Bridget Howarth</i>	<i>Lorna Perry</i>	<i>Simon Colston</i>	<i>David Rees-Jones</i>
<i>Imogen Berman</i>	<i>Alison St Denis</i>	<i>Keith Parker</i>	<i>Simon Littlewood</i>
<i>Bethany Seymour</i>	<i>Tom Verney</i>	<i>Adam Berman</i>	<i>David Ireson</i>
<i>Katharine Verney</i>		<i>Benedict Hymas</i>	<i>Basil McDonald</i>

Southbank Sinfonia

Now in its twelfth year, Southbank Sinfonia provides an intensive orchestral apprenticeship over eight months each year for 32 of the very best young graduates of conservatoires and music colleges. Its primary mission is to give the players, who each receive a bursary over the duration of the programme, additional skills and the experience to help smooth their way through the notoriously difficult transition period between conservatoire and the music profession. Southbank Sinfonia is increasingly recognised for its pioneering spirit, exploring and leading the way forward for the 21st century musician.

Adrian Butterfield

Adrian Butterfield is a violinist, director and conductor who specialises in performing music from 1600-1900 on period instruments. He is musical director of the Tilford Bach Society and associate director of the London Handel Festival and regularly directs the London Handel Orchestra and Players as well as working as a soloist and guest director in Europe and North America. Each year he undertakes a week-long Baroque project with Southbank Sinfonia, which culminates in a concert at the London Handel festival.

Tilford Bach Festival 2014

Tilford Church

6 June 8-00pm

Elizabeth Wallfisch & Adrian Butterfield: Virtuoso violin concertos

7 June 8-00pm

Rachel Brown, Elizabeth Cragg: A celebration of JS & CPE Bach

8 June 7-00pm

Dame Emma Kirkby, James Blaze, Nicholas Mulroy, Matthew Brook

JS Bach B Minor Mass - Kyrie & Gloria & Cantata 172

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