



T B S



City Bach Collective

Emily Atkinson – Soprano

Helen Daniels – Alto

Robert Jenkins – Tenor

Cheyney Kent – Bass

Leader - Hazel Brooks

26 October 2019

www.tilbach.org.uk

**making
music**

Programme

The first few decades of the sixteenth century saw momentous changes in church music, especially in Germany, as the Reformation swept through the church. The polyphonic music of the Renaissance, while undoubtedly uplifting and ethereal, tended to obscure the meaning of the text and Luther especially wanted people to remember the sacred truth they met in church through singing simpler tunes that they could remember and sing for themselves (traditionally in the form of a chorale) rather than have the words obscured by many overlapping lines of music, however beautiful, performed for them by a choir. One of tonight's composers, Johannes Weinmann, saw this at first hand as he was organist at Wittenberg, the heart of the Reformation where Luther pasted his 95 theses on the church door on 31st October 1517.

JS Bach (1685-1750)

Cantata BWV 61: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

Composed in Weimar in 1714 for Advent, this was based on a hymn by Martin Luther. itself based on the Ambrosian hymn *Veni redemptor gentium*. Bach superimposes the medieval chant on the modern overture of Lully, bringing a flavour of majesty and expectation. At the midpoint, Bach switches from the external to the internal aspect of Christ entering the soul with the bass recitative (4) "*Siehe, ich stehe vor der Tür und klopfe an*" (*See, I stand before the door and knock*) where the knocking is expressed by pizzicato chords. The final joyful but brief chorale uses the tune of the hymn *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*.

Johannes Weinmann (c. 1477-1542) & JS Bach

Vater Unser

Weinmann was born in Nuremberg around 1477. It is known that he studied at Leipzig University from 1492 before becoming organist in his home town. In 1506 he was appointed organist at the Schlosskirche at Wittenberg, and from 1509 he resumed his studies at Wittenberg University, where he was also rector and magister. He apparently converted to Protestantism in 1520 or 1521 while retaining his posts in Wittenberg. When he died, he was apparently praised by the University for his musical excellence, however his only extant work is this four-voice setting of Luther's *Vater unser im Himmelreich*. This rather forward-looking piece places the cantus firmus (the main tune) in the top voice instead of in the tenor, a change typical of post-Reformation choral works.

Johann Gottlieb Janitsch (1708-1763)

Quartet in G minor, "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden", 3rd movement

Janitsch was born in Schweidnitz, Silesia, now in Poland. He received his first musical education at the Latin school in his hometown, and later in Breslau with the court musicians. In 1729 his father sent him to Frankfurt an der Oder, where he studied law and received his first commissions to write large scale musical works for festive occasions.

He became secretary to the Prussian state in Berlin and later obtained employment as a musician, a "Contraviolinist", in the ensemble of Crown Prince Frederick. During this time Janitsch founded the so-called Friday academies in which music was performed by professional and amateur musicians alike.

From 1740, Janitsch's position as Contraviolinist was transferred to the newly founded Berlin Court Orchestra, but the Friday academies continued in Berlin. From 1743, he composed and organised "Redutenmusik" for the annual court balls held at carnival time. His compositions were of the "galant style" and many were thought to have been destroyed during the Second World War but some were rediscovered later in Kiev Conservatory.

JS Bach (1685-1750)

Cantata BWV 84, Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke

"I am content with my luck", this cantata was composed in Leipzig in 1727, for a service where the Gospel reading was the parable of the vineyard workers, who were all paid the same though they worked different lengths of time. It may have struck a chord with Bach whose relation to his employers was difficult. Yet central aria is a joyful expression of faith, and the final chorale is remarkable.

--- INTERVAL ---

Drinks are free but donations to cover costs are much appreciated

Two toilets are located through the open wooden arch by the piano to the left of the stage area and then the door in the left wall. There are also toilets in the church offices beyond the entrance gates (3 mins walk)- please ask reception for directions.

Heinrich Schütz (1615-1672)

Wir glauben all an einen Gott

Schütz was born in Köstritz to an innkeeper, and owed his early musical education to being heard singing by a nobleman at the inn who eventually persuaded his parents to let him educate the boy at his court in Kassel. Schütz later studied music in Venice with Giovanni Gabrieli from 1609-1612, and also later with Monteverdi. His principal post was as court composer to the Elector of Saxony.

He is generally regarded as the most important German composer before Bach and is credited with bringing the Italian style to Germany and continuing its evolution into the Early Baroque. Most of his music was written for the Lutheran church, primarily for the Electoral Chapel in Dresden. He wrote what is thought to be the first German opera, *Dafne*, but sadly its music has been lost, along with nearly all his ceremonial and theatrical scores.

Matthias Weckmann (1616-1674)

Sonata no. 7 (2 violins, viola, viol, organ)

Weckmann was born in Niederdorla (Thuringia) and died in Hamburg. He was musically trained under Schütz in Dresden as a chorister at the Saxon Court. He spent some time in Denmark then became organist at the Jakobkirche in Hamburg. His musical style largely followed Schütz. He composed chorale preludes and music for the organ and harpsichord that mixes Italian and French influences, various sonatas for three or four instruments, and orchestral and vocal sacred music.

Heinrich Schütz (1615-1672)

Herr nun lässest du deinen Diener

JS Bach (1685-1750)

Air from the Suite no. 3 BWV 1068

Cantata BWV 166, Wo gehest du hin?

This Easter cantata Where are you going, composed in 1724, is based on Christ's words "But now I go my way to Him that sent me and none of you asketh me Whither goest thou". The music, and texts depict the disciples applying this question to themselves, especially the tenor aria (2) with its haunting oboe. The soprano chorale (3) shows Bach's wonderful counterpoint and the frivolous alto aria depicts the fickleness of life. The final chorale is a prayer set to Georg Neumark's hymn *Wer nun den Lieben Gott lässt walten*.

City Bach Collective

The City Bach Collective perform Bach Cantatas and other music regularly as part of a Lutheran Bach Vespers service at St Mary-at-Hill Church near the Monument in the City of London. The performances use period instruments. These performances were started originally by Peter Lea-Cox in 1976 combining his work as organist with performance opportunities for his students at the Royal Academy. The City Bach Collective is a fully professional group of musicians who are continuing this tradition.

<http://citybachcollective.org.uk/>

American Soprano **Emily Atkinson** studied at the Crane School of Music in New York and at the Royal College of Music in London. She is a member of the Tallis Scholars and has appeared as a soloist in more than fifty Bach cantatas in the Bach Vespers series, and has recorded a CD of Italian solo cantatas. Emily combines her busy performing career with work teaching primary school music classes, leading workshops for children, and mentoring new music teachers.



Alto **Helen Daniels** was a choral scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge University. Helen now sings with the choir of St Pancras Church and is a member of The Carice Singers, Sansara and The Laycock Scholars. Helen is a budding recitalist and enjoys devising creative and challenging programmes for audiences to explore. Alongside singing, Helen plays the clarinet and enjoys performing with the London Incidental Orchestra.

Tenor **Robert Jenkins** completed his Bachelor in Music (Honours) degree at Birmingham Conservatoire in 2012, where he was Tenor Lay Clark at Birmingham Cathedral. Robert now follows a freelance career and sings with many professional ensembles, including the BBC Singers, Ex-Cathedra, Polyphony, Philharmonia Voices and Siglo de Oro.



Bass **Cheyney Kent** studied at King's College London and the Royal Academy of Music. Cheyney sings in all manner of professional ensembles from opera chorus with both English & Welsh National Opera to small consorts such as Sonoro. Performing regularly at Bach Vespers since 2005, Cheyney has sung in over fifty sacred cantatas by JS Bach and as the soloist in the St John Passion, B Minor Mass and Christmas Oratorio.

Instrumentalists

Violins: Hazel Brooks (leader-director), & Ben Samson **Viola:** Joanne Miller
Cello & viol: Jenny Bullock **Violone:** Kate Aldridge
Organ: Oliver-John Ruthven **Oboe:** Belinda Paul

Future Farnham Concert Dates

22 November, Farnham Methodist Church

Ensemble Mirage: Beethoven Septet and Schubert Octet

7 December Tilford Church: Carols by Candlelight (tbc)

Future Conservatoire Concert Dates @Godalming Baptist Church

19 October: Allitsen Piano Trio

9 November: En Canto Vocal Duo with Fado Duo and Piano

30 November: Ensemble Renard (Wind Quintet)

11 January: Baroque Festival

www.conservatoireconcerts.org.uk