

The Utah Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists presents

# Bach and Baroque

Friday, March 21, 2025 ♦ 7:00 p.m.

Provo Central Stake Center

450 North 1220 West, Provo, Utah

## Krebs, Praeludium in F pro organo pleno

Katherine Rosenvall

Like his father before him, Johann Ludwig Krebs studied with the great Johann Sebastian Bach, drawing high praise from the master and emulating his style in a long list of organ preludes, toccatas, fantasias, fugues, and chorale preludes. The Praeludium in F transforms a simple chord progression into a spirited toccata. The title, *organo pleno*, indicates the registration: principal chorus and mixture with 32' pedal and pedal reeds.

## Anna Amalia of Prussia, Trio in C Major

Miranda Wilcox

Musicians speak fondly of King Frederick II of Prussia (the Great), who was not only a patron of the arts, but also a flutist and a composer. Curiously, less is said of his equally skilled sister, Princess Anna Amalia of Prussia, or their niece the Duchess Anna Amalia of Sachsen Weimar. The Princess was a close friend of C.P.E. Bach; the Duchess held salon for such German intellectuals as Goethe and Schiller. Each composed an array of chamber works that was said to be sophisticated and elegant. However, it is not clear which of the Anna Amalias composed the Bach-like Trio in C Major. Harpsichordist David Bolton gives the nod to the Princess, as she had studied with Johann Philipp Kirnberger, who in turn studied with Bach.

## Buxtehude, Ach Herr mich Armen Sünder, BuxWV 178

Daniel Splattstoesser

Danish composer Dieterich Buxtehude represented the pinnacle of the North German organ school and exerted an outsized influence the next generation of Baroque composers, including Bach, who famously walked to Lübeck to hear him play. BuxWV 178 is one of 46 surviving chorale preludes. The tune, composed in 1601 by Hans Leo Hassler, is known to Latter-day Saints as the music of Hymn 197, "O Savior, Thou Who Wearest a Crown." In Buxtehude's day, it was sung to a paraphrase of Psalm 6, "O Lord, rebuke me not in thy hot displeasure."

## Bach, from Twelve Little Preludes: BWV 939, 925, 999

Kim McCoy

A diverse variety of free-form preludes, beloved by generations of keyboardists and their teachers, were compiled in the nineteenth century from earlier sources into *Twelve Short Preludes*. Little is known about BWV 939, a fantasia. The exuberant BWV 925 comes from the *Klavierbüchlein für Wilhelm Friedemann Bach*, and BWV 999 was originally written for lute.

## Bach, "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," BWV 147

Edward Dawson

Since 1926, the year Myra Hess published her definitive piano transcription, "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" has been performed most often as a solo piano or organ work. However, the original is a chorale scored for four-part choir and small Baroque ensemble (trumpet, two oboes, strings, basso continuo) and twice embedded in the cantata *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben* (BWV 147). A lilting 9|8 obligato flows gently through and around the choir, expressing the joy and contentment of the hymn, "Wohl mir, dass ich Jesum habe" ("Well for me that I have Christ"). The English version, attributed to poet laureate Richard Burns, loosely paraphrases the German: "Jesu, joy of man's desiring, / Holy wisdom, love most bright; / Drawn by Thee, our souls aspiring / Soar to uncreated light."

## Bach, Vater unser im Himmelreich, BWV 737

Rebecca Brand

"Vater unser im Himmelreich" is Martin Luther's paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer, written and paired with an austere tune in 1538 and still sung as a Communion hymn. Bach's chorale prelude, thought to be an early work, is written in *stile antico*, a Baroque borrowing of the Renaissance motet form. Its four parts could easily be sung; Bach's choice of genre suggests veneration for a solemn text.

### Bach, Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659

Heidi Rodeback

"Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland" ("Savior of the nations, come") is one of the Great Eighteen Chorale Preludes written between 1708 and 1717, when Bach was serving as court organist and *Konzertmeister* in Weimar, then revisited and prepared for publication between 1740 and 1750, Bach's final decade. The hymn, sung on the first Sunday of Advent, evokes the mystery of Incarnation and the yearnings of a people longing for light. The cantus firmus, a heavily ornamented, continuously spiraling melody, is provided in the soprano line; it is grounded by a walking bass above which alto and tenor voices move in imitation.

### Bach, Fugue in Eb Major, sections 1 & 2, BWV 552

Lori Serr

In Leipzig, between 1731 and 1741, a mature Bach published four keyboard collections in his *Clavier-Übung*. The third, comprised entirely of organ works, was structured in the form of a mass, its twenty-one movements bookended by the prelude and fugue of BWV 552, functioning as invocation and benediction. In each, Bach employed his love of numerology to invoke the Trinity, writing in three flats and structuring each in three sections. The fugue has been dubbed "St. Anne" for its resemblance to the English hymn ("O God, our help in ages past"). Describing its three sections, Alexander Schreiner wrote:

*The triple fugue...is a symbol of the Trinity. The same theme recurs in three connected fugues, but each time with another personality. The first fugue is calm and majestic, with an absolutely uniform movement throughout; in the second the theme seems to be disguised, and is only occasionally recognizable in its true shape, as if to suggest the divine assumption of an earthly form; in the third, it is transformed into rushing semiquavers as if the Pentecostal wind were coming roaring from heaven.*

### Bach, Alle Menschen müssen sterben, BWV 643

Lynette Golze

In 1708, while serving as organist and *Konzertmeister* in Weimar, Bach began assembling his *Orgelbüchlein*, a collection of chorale preludes spanning the liturgical year. Intended for practical use, each was based on a Lutheran chorale, given a motivic accompaniment, and allowed freely to explore form. Most importantly, the settings were imbued with emotion highlighting the meaning of the text. BWV 643 ("Alle Menschen müssen sterben," translated as "All mankind must die") reflects on death, but the setting is versatile. It can be somber and reflective, sweet and gentle, or—as is common among Bach's treatments of death—expressive of heavenly joy. To organist Raymond Nagem, the gently rocking motive suggests a cradle: "If this is death, Bach seems to say, it is nothing more than falling asleep in the arms of a loving God."

### Bach, Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein, BWV 641

Jay Goodliffe

BWV 641, also from the *Orgelbüchlein*, is a contemplative prelude on a hymn that pleads for forgiveness: "When in the hour of utmost need, / We know not where to look for aid . . . / Then this our comfort is alone, / That we may meet before Thy throne, / And cry, O faithful God, to Thee, / For rescue from our misery." Anchored by a steady harmonic rhythm, the meandering ornamentation suggests the restlessness of earnest prayer.

### Bach, Prelude & Fugue in E Minor, BWV 533

Michael Klinefelter

A youthful Bach took his first position as organist at the New Church (now Bach Church) in Arnstadt, serving from 1703 to 1708. BWV 533, known as the "Cathedral" prelude and fugue, was among his first works composed here and presents an early example of the discrete prelude and fugue form (in contrast to the continuous *praeludium*). The work was a favorite of Mendelssohn, who performed it in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, and though the nickname probably derives from this performance, it is easy to envision vaulted spaces via the magisterial figures of both prelude and fugue.