

2025
YORK
EARLY
MUSIC
FESTIVAL

Yorkshire Baroque Soloists

Bach Sacred and Secular

National Centre for Early Music
Tuesday 8 July 1.00pm

Yorkshire Baroque Soloists

Bethany Seymour *soprano*

Edwina Smith *flute*

Lucy Russell, Agata Darashkaite *violins*

Alan George *viola*

Rachel Gray *cello*

Rosie Moon *violone*

Peter Seymour *director*

Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750

Cantata: Non sa che sia dolore, BWV209

Cantata: Ich habe genug, BWV82

It is sometimes suggested that JS Bach was a reactionary and out-of-date composer who wrote too often in an earlier style. There is some truth in this idea, but only in so far as he was interested in all musical styles. For example, he studied sixteenth-century counterpoint after the manner of Palestrina because of the skills this study would allow him to acquire. At certain times he uses just this sort of archaic style, for example when wanting to express ideas related to history or to do with the timelessness of God's promises.

However, he was also very keen to learn and use the very latest compositional techniques as well as to try out the very latest instruments and his interest in things new was not confined only to his immediate locality but to innovations from right across Europe. And so, we find that whilst at Cöthen he wrote out and arranged many Italian concertos by such as Vivaldi and Albinoni. It was by this method of copying out other composers' compositions that he assimilated new styles and new compositional forms.

This programme explores styles 'hot off the press' from Italy and which Bach adapted for his own purposes. The cantata, in many ways the vocal equivalent of the concerto, which was also originally an Italianate form.

Cantata 209, ***Non sa che sia dolore***, brings together both concerto and cantata forms, in that although the overall form is that of the Italian cantata, with two recitatives and two da capo arias which could have come straight out of an opera, these are prefaced by a Sinfonia which is essentially a concerto movement, in this

case for flute. There is no manuscript for this piece in Bach's hand and so definite dating is difficult, but the instrumental style, with the distinctive 4-part writing, as well as the formal layout of the movements suggests he may have written it at Leipzig, possibly to perform with his students from the University, in the informal setting of the Collegium Musicum, a music club which met to perform either in a coffee house or in nearby gardens.

The text deals with the departure and return home of a young academic, perhaps one of the more popular members of this Collegium Musicum. The first recitative and aria reflect the pain and sadness of those left behind by this departure; the second recitative and aria are more positive and reflect on the intellectual strength of the young traveller and call on him to reject the anxiety and dread of the journey and to look forward positively to the attractions of his destination.

One of Bach's most famous cantatas, *Ich habe genug* was composed for a solo bass in Leipzig in 1727 for the Feast *Mariae Reinigung* (Purification of Mary) and first performed on 2 February 1727. In a version for soprano, BWV 82a, possibly first performed in 1731, the part of the obbligato oboe is replaced by a flute and the whole score transposed up a third. Part of the music was clearly a favourite of Bach's and appears in the *Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach*; this is the first recitative and second aria – 'Ich habe genug' and 'Schlummert ein'.

The opening aria has thematic similarities to 'Erbarme dich' in *Matthaeus Passion* and to other arias expressing a contentedness with life. The first recitative begins with the same words as the first aria, and the central aria 'Schlummert ein' presents an extended da capo structure with the opening material appearing three rather than two times. This is followed by another recitative and closing aria, an exultant dance as the text looks forward to death in a triple time matching the emotion of the first aria.

© Peter Seymour

Cantata: *Non sa che sia dolore*

1. Sinfonia

2. Recitativo

Non sa che sia dolore Chi dall' amico suo parte e non more. Il fanciullin' che plora e geme Ed allor che più ei teme, Vien la madre a consolar. Va dunque a cenni del cielo, Adempi or di Minerva il zelo.

Recitative

He does not know what sorrow is who parts from his friend and does not die. The little child weeps and moans, and indeed, the more fearful he is, his mother comes to console him. Therefore, go and seek a sign from heaven, that you will now fulfil Minerva's purpose.

3. Aria

Parti pur e con dolore Lasci a noi dolente il core.

La patria goderai, A dover la servirai; Varchi or di sponda in sponda, Propizi vedi il vento e l'onda.

Aria

Go then, and with grief Leave to us our sorrowful hearts.

You will delight your nation, As you will serve it with duty; Set sail now from shore to shore,

you will find the winds and waves gracious.

4. Recitativo

Tuo saver al tempo e l'età contrasta, Virtù e valor solo a vincer basta; Ma chi gran ti farà più che non fusti Ansbach, piena di tanti Augusti.

Recitative

Your knowledge contrasts with your age and years, strength and bravery alone are enough for victory; but greater than you were will you now be, Ansbach, favoured by such august ones.

5. Aria

Ricetti gramezza e pavento, Qual nocchier, placato il vento

Più non teme o si scolora, Ma contento in su la prora Va cantando in faccia al mar.

Aria

Suppressing grief and fear, The sailor, in quiet winds, no longer is fearful or pale, but happily upon his prow goes forth singing in the face of the sea.

Cantata: Ich habe genug

I. Aria

Ich habe genug, Ich habe den Heiland, das Hoffen der Frommen, Auf meine begierigen Arme genommen; Ich habe genug!

Ich hab ihn erblickt, Mein Glaube hat Jesum ans Herze gedrückt; Nun wünsch ich, noch heute mit Freuden Von hinnen zu scheiden.

Aria

I have enough, I have taken the Saviour, the hope of the righteous, into my eager arms; I have enough!

I have beheld him, my faith has pressed Jesus to my heart; now I wish, even today with joy to depart from here.

2. Rezitativ

Ich habe genug. Mein Trost ist nur allein, Daß Jesus mein und ich sein eigen möchte sein.

Im Glauben halt ich ihn, Da seh ich auch mit Simeon Die Freude jenes Lebens schon.

Laßt uns mit diesem Manne ziehn! Ach! möchte mich von meines Leibes Ketten Der Herr erretten; Ach! wäre doch mein Abschied hier, Mit Freuden sagt ich, Welt, zu dir: Ich habe genug.

Recitative

I have enough. My comfort is this alone, that Jesus might be mine and I His own. In faith I hold him, there I see, along with Simeon, already the joy of the other life. Let us go with this man!

Ah! if only the Lord might rescue me from the chains of my body; Ah! were only my departure here, with joy I would say, world, to you: I have enough.

3. Arie

Schlummert ein, ihr matten Augen, Fallet sanft und selig zu!

Welt, ich bleibe nicht mehr hier, Hab ich doch kein Teil an dir, Das der Seele könnte taugen.

Hier muß ich das Elend bauen, Aber dort, dort werd ich schauen Süßen Friede, stille Ruh.

Aria

Fall asleep, you weary eyes, close softly and pleasantly!

World, I will not remain here any longer, I own no part of you that could matter to my soul.

Here I must build up misery, but there, there I will see sweet peace, quiet rest.

4. Rezitativ

Mein Gott! wenn kömmt das schöne: Nun! Da ich im Friede fahren werde Und in dem Sande kühler Erde Und dort bei dir im Schoße ruhn? Der Abschied ist gemacht, Welt, gute Nacht!

Recitative

My God! When will the lovely 'now!' come, when I will journey into peace and into the cool soil of earth, and there, near you, rest in your lap? My farewells are made, world, good night!

5. Arie

Ich freue mich auf meinen Tod, Ach, hätt' er sich schon eingefunden. Da entkomm ich aller Not,

Die mich noch auf der Welt gebunden.

Aria

I delight in my death, ah, if it were only present already!

Then I will emerge from all the suffering that still binds me to the world.

Yorkshire Baroque Soloists

Yorkshire Baroque Solists was formed in 1973 by Peter Seymour to perform a repertoire from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for vocal and instrumental forces ranging from chamber to orchestral size. The group has performed and recorded in most European countries and has regularly appeared in Baroque and Classical repertoire in York Early Music Festival.

Much of the orchestra's work has been with Yorkshire Bach Choir and recent performances have included Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, Handel's *Dixit Dominus* and Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*. Commercially released recordings have included Bach's *Motets* (Carlton); *A Festal Mass at the Imperial Court in Vienna, 1648* (Carlton); Mozart's *Requiem*; *Psalms and motets by Tomás Luis de Victoria*; Monteverdi *Vespro Della Beata Vergine*; Bach Family Motets. In 2011 YBS recordings of Bach *St John Passion* and *B minor Mass* were released by Signum Records. In September 2013, YBS recorded Bach's early version in a new edition by Peter Seymour of *St Matthew Passion* also for Signum Records. This uses solo voices throughout; singers include Charles Daniels (Evangelist), Peter Harvey (Christus), Bethany Seymour, Helen Neeves, Sally Bruce-Payne, Nancy Cole, Joseph Cornwell, Julian Podger and Matthew Brook.

YBS has performed Purcell's *Fairy Queen* and *Dido & Aeneas* in Festival Mitte Europa (in Germany and Czech Republic) and presented a Purcell Day of three concerts in Merseburg (Germany) and at Köthener Herbst performed a programme of music by Bach, Torelli and Handel from Bach's library from his time at Köthen. In recent summers YBS has appeared at Ryedale Festival and at Knechtsteden Festival Alte Musik.

The current season's programme with Yorkshire Bach Choir has included *St Matthew Passion*, Bach *Magnificat* and cantatas 191 and 110 as well as cantatas 209 and 82 in York Early Music Festival. The coming season includes Haydn *The Creation* (6 December), Bach *St John Passion* (21 March, 2026) and begins on 25 October with a programme of music by Haydn and Mozart written for the Salzburg court.

YORK EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

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