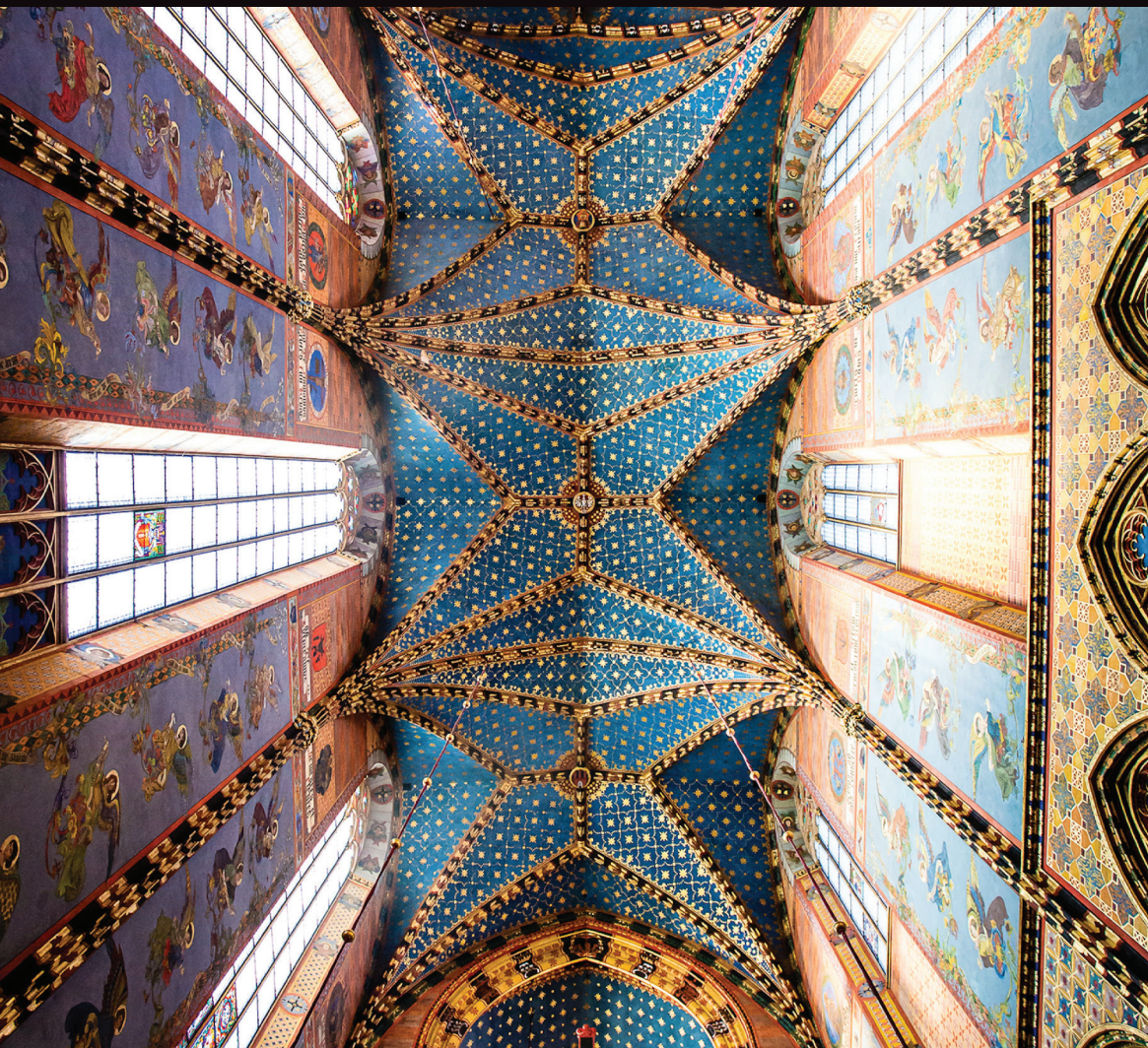




OXFORD BACH  
SOLOISTS

# BACH MOTETS VAULTS OF HEAVEN



**OCTOBER 2022 – MARCH 2023**

NEW COLLEGE CHAPEL & ST MICHAEL AT THE NORTH GATE

# BACH MOTETS SEASON

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I am delighted to welcome you to this series of concerts, that focus around J.S. Bach's motets BWV 225 to 230. Bach's motets constitute the most perfect and gem-like set amongst his works. They lay at the heart of his work as a teacher and choir-trainer, and grew out of a genre which the Bach family had cultivated for generations. This was the repertory that all his pupils were expected to sing and to master, and so there seems no better repertoire to work on with our new cohort of choral scholars.

As ever, I want to thank all our Friends, supporters, and everyone who comes to our concerts. Without your continued support, OBS would not be able to continue bringing you our music-making. The cultural landscape post the pandemic is proving tricky to navigate, but knowing that we are so well supported gives me the confidence to know that we will be able to continue to flourish.

Warmest wishes,  
Tom Hammond Davies

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## CONCERTS

**SUNDAY 2 OCTOBER, 2.30PM**  
NEW COLLEGE CHAPEL  
'Der Geist hilft'

**SUNDAY 6 NOVEMBER, 2.30PM**  
NEW COLLEGE CHAPEL  
'Lobet den Herrn'

**SUNDAY 11 DECEMBER, 8.30PM**  
ST MICHAEL AT THE NORTH GATE  
'Singet dem Herrn'

**SUNDAY 8 JANUARY, 2.30PM**  
NEW COLLEGE CHAPEL  
'Fürchte dich nicht'

**SUNDAY 5 FEBRUARY, 2.30PM**  
NEW COLLEGE CHAPEL  
'Jesu, meine Freude'

**SUNDAY 5 MARCH, 2.30PM**  
NEW COLLEGE CHAPEL  
'Komm, Jesu, komm'

# PROGRAMME

SUNDAY 5 FEBRUARY, 2.30PM

## JESU, MEINE FREUDE

BACH	Ich habe genug, BWV 82A
WALTHER	Partita sopra 'Jesu, meine Freude'
BACH	Jesu, meine Freude, BWV 227
BACH	Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht, BWV 55

## MUSICIANS

### Conductor

Tom Hammond Davies

### Flute

Yu-Wei Hu

### Oboe

Mark Baigent

### Violin

Davina Clarke, Beatrice Scaldini

### Viola

George White

### Cello

Henrik Persson

### Double Bass

Rosie Moon

### Organ

Dónal McCann

### Harpsichord

Anhad Arora

### Tenor Soloist

Nick Pritchard

### Soprano 1

Daisy Livesey, Lizi Vineall

### Soprano 2

Katie Ambrose, Saskia Bibb

### Alto

Louise Ashdown, Charlotte Sleet

### Tenor

Maurice Cole, Colin Danskin

### Bass

Ignacio Cornejo, Charlie Epps,  
Ben Gilchrist



# OXFORD BACH SOLOISTS

**The Oxford Bach Soloists (OBS)** is a Baroque ensemble whose ambition is to perform, in sequence, the complete canon of J. S. Bach's vocal works over 12 years. Founded by Tom Hammond-Davies (Artistic Director) in 2015, OBS offers a unique musical experience that converges composer, performer, and audience.

**The OBS's mission is distinctive and pioneering;** while there have been many recordings and performances of Bach's complete vocal works, OBS is performing them **chronologically**, programmed in **real-time**, and set in the **context** for which they were conceived – for instance, as Bach would have with performers, instruments and venues that echo the university and churches of his hometown of Leipzig.

Bach's music is community music. He was part of an extended network of musicians in northern Germany and today, OBS champions our local students, scholars, players, and soloists.

## **Artistic Director**

Tom Hammond-Davies

## **General Manager**

Katie Ambrose

## **Individual Giving Manager**

Paull Hammond-Davies

## **Concert Manager**

Nathan Grassi

## **Friends Coordinator**

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[www.oxfordbachsoloists.com](http://www.oxfordbachsoloists.com)

[info@oxfordbachsoloists.com](mailto:info@oxfordbachsoloists.com)

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# NEW COLLEGE OXFORD

New College was founded in 1379 by William of Wykeham (1324-1404), bishop of Winchester, as 'the college of St Mary of Winchester in Oxford', and it was the largest college in Oxford at that time. It very soon became known as New College to distinguish it from an earlier Oxford college (Oriel, founded 1326) also dedicated to the Virgin Mary, but its full title remains in use today for formal transactions.

Wykeham had risen from modest beginnings in Hampshire to become Lord Chancellor twice, under both Edward III and Richard II. He allowed New College to adopt his private coat of arms and personal motto 'Manners makyth Man' as emblematic of its collegiate identity.

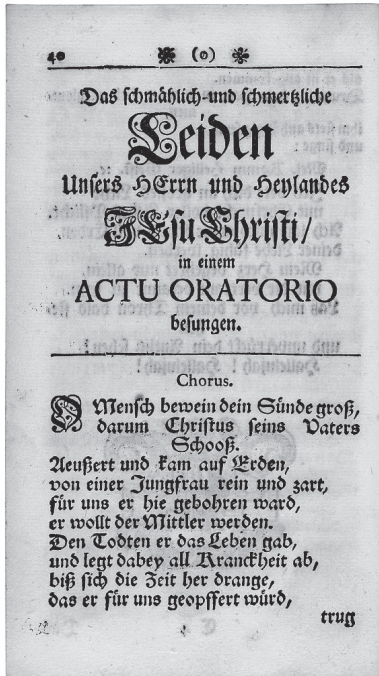
His statutes provided for a college comprising a Warden and 70 Fellows, both graduates and, a novelty at the time, undergraduates. Senior Fellows taught the juniors - the beginning of a formal tutorial system. The provision of religious services, chaplains and choristers were central to Wykeham's scheme; the Choir and Choir School persist to this day.

Architecturally, New College was innovative in its enclosed quadrangle (finished 1386) - the first of its type, which has since become one of the defining features of colleges across Oxford and Cambridge. It included all the essential elements required by the Fellows in one single quad - accommodation, library, chapel, and dining hall.





## CHRISTOPH BIRKMANN, THE STUDENT LIBRETTIST FOR J S BACH



*Christine Blanken (2015),  
Bach-Jahrbuch 101, p. 57.*

The text for both BWV 55 and BWV 82 was written by Christoph Birkmann, a mathematics student at Leipzig in 1724-1727 who published the libretti of the cantatas when he became a curate near Nuremberg in 1728 under the title "Gott-geheiligte Sabbaths-Zehnden" ("God-devoted Sunday Tithes comprising Sacred Cantatas for all High Feast Days and Sundays, dedicated to the congregation at Hersbruck for God-blessed devotion by Christoph Birkmann, candidate for the ministry, printed in Nuremberg by Lorenz Bieling").

The preface to this and his autobiography give a rare insight into how cantatas were conceived, performed and edited and the importance of the student scene in Leipzig for Bach's oeuvre.

There were practical reasons for involving the 23-year-old student as adviser, singer, and instrumentalist: the Leipzig authorities had just cut down on choral provisions through the Thomasschule and J S Bach had to provide the Sunday music with reduced forces. He turned to talented and cash-strapped students at the renowned local university whom he invited to his house for music and discussions. But there was also clearly a shared religious interest expressed in the cantata-coproduction. Birkmann came from a poor Nuremberg family but with an excellent education as a chorister of classical and modern languages, mathematics, music theory and practice and a religious education provided by a teacher who had trained with the Pietists in Halle. He worked with Bach, remodelling

older libretti such as the one for the St John's Passion with a focus on the emotional expression of religious feeling and writing new texts mainly for the solo-singing soul -perfect expression of the devout Christian (and saving money on performers).

Today's two cantatas show the range of music which Bach used for setting these chamber-pieces of Christian life: from tormented recitatives jumping up and down the scale to reflect the gulf of sin between God and the singer to the joyful dance-of-death rhythms of the aria 'Ich freue mich auf meinen Tod' (BWV 82). Birkmann's text are direct dialogues of the individual soul with God, lamenting the wretched state of being a 'servant to sin' (BWV 55) and longing to be brought to heavenly joy by 'death, brother of slumber' - a phrase from another cantata (BWV 56) by Birkmann which is put into music by the 'Schlummert ein' aria (BWV 82). Ultimately it was this lullaby with its repetition of soothing 'sanft und selig' (sweet and serene/blessed) which was copied into Anna Magdalena's notebook - the perfect combination of personal piety and an ingeniously simple setting.

*Henrike Lähnemann is Professor of Medieval German Literature and Linguistics at the University of Oxford and has worked with OBS on a number of projects contextualising Bach's cantatas within the Protestant German tradition.*

## BACH: CANTATA “ICH HABE GENUNG”, BWV 82

Bach wrote his solo cantata, “Ich habe genug”, in 1727 for the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated on 2nd February. The work was evidently a favourite of his since he made no less than four versions of it, as well as numerous revisions. In its earliest form the scoring is for bass with oboe, strings and continuo. In about 1731 Bach reworked the cantata in a second version, for soprano, transposing the prevailing C minor key of the original to E minor, and substituting a transverse flute for the oboe. The only surviving manuscript parts are those for flute and voice. It is this version that is being performed with tenor voice in this afternoon’s concert.

Some four or more years later, after 1735, Bach reverted to the key of C minor in a third version, whose tessitura lies within the mezzo soprano/alto range. Finally, sometime between 1735 and 1748 Bach adjusted the cantata for bass voice, once again, but returning to what may well have been his original intention of adding an oboe da caccia, which doubles the violin in the second aria, “Schlummert ein”. In addition to these versions the recitative “Ich habe genug” (No. 2) and the aria “Schlummert ein” (No. 4) are included in arrangements for soprano voice and harpsichord in the *Klavierbüchlein* compiled by Bach’s second wife Anna Magdalena (1725). So, clearly a family favourite.

The text, by an unidentified librettist, contains no direct Biblical reference, but deals in general terms with the account in St. Luke’s gospel of the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, and with Simeon, whose words are paraphrased in the initial aria. The cantata opens with an instrumental prelude leading to the first aria. Above a murmuring string accompaniment the solo flute weaves an expressive melody which is taken up by the soprano. A recitative containing passages of arioso is followed by one of Bach’s most affecting arias, “Schlummert ein, ihr matten Augen”. He scores this tender, extended ‘da capo’ slumber aria, with its gently sighing phrases, and in the relative key of G major, for flute, strings and continuo. This beguiling music is followed by a second recitative, which closes with a brief section of arioso. The cantata concludes with a lively dance-like aria scored for flute and strings.

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## JOHANN GOTTFRIED WALTHER: PARTITA SOPRA 'JESU, MEINE FREUDE'

The 'chorale partita' is a musical melting pot of a genre, deriving from a burgeoning liturgical necessity across the continent. The Reformation brought a new focus on congregational hymn-singing, which encouraged organists to question their role within the liturgy, and experimentation with both accompaniment and how to incorporate these tunes into the rest of services. John Bull and other English composers, such as William Byrd, wrote keyboard variations on secular themes, as did his Spanish contemporaries, notably Antonio de Cabezón.

The Dutch composer Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621), having possibly met John Bull (who wrote a Fantasia on a fugue by Sweelinck) took religious tunes and treated them in a formerly secular fashion. Samuel Scheidt and other student of Sweelinck's were responsible for the proliferation of this genre throughout Germany, and so it was no surprise that both Bach and Walther would make their own contributions. It is worth mentioning the role of improvisation within these variations; the methods of variation deployed in these partitas are intrinsically linked to those practising organists would have used every day.

I will leave an exploration of the text of *Jesu, meine Freude* to the notes on Bach's extraordinary motet, but through 10 statements of the tune, Walther finds a variety of colours to evoke the colourful and defiant message of this chorale.

*C Dónal McCann*

## BACH: MOTET “JESU, MEINE FREUDE”, BWV 227

When Bach was writing his motets, during the 1720s, the form was in decline in all areas of Germany except Saxony-Thuringia. Here, in Bach's homeland, the motet tradition continued throughout the eighteenth and even into the nineteenth century. One of the reasons for its decline elsewhere was the popularity and rapid development of the sacred cantata, whose structure allowed for greater vocal and instrumental virtuosity. The strength of the motet, on the other hand, lay in its ability to proclaim an entire biblical text or a hymn without the intrusive elements of recitative and aria.

“Jesu, meine Freude” is the most extended of Bach's motets. The backbone of the text is provided by six verses of a hymn (1659) of the same name by Johann Franck – Bach twice incorporated verses from this hymn in his cantatas, BWV 81 and 133. Alternating with the hymn verses, with its associated melody, are five verses from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Chapter 8). Bach's vocal textures range from three to five-part writing and are organised in what one Bach writer, drawing upon a Blakean epithet has described as “fearful symmetry”. Bach lays it out in the following way:

1. Chorale (Franck's hymn) verse 1 in a four-part vocal setting
2. Romans 8:1 in a five-part harmonization
3. Chorale verse 2 in a florid five-part setting
4. Romans 8:2 in a three-part setting
5. Chorale verse 3 in a five-strand adaptation of its melody
6. Romans 8:9 in a five-strand double fugue
7. Chorale verse 4 in a four-part florid setting with the ‘cantus firmus’ (hymn melody) in the soprano line
8. Romans 8:10 in a three-part setting
9. Chorale verse 5 in a four-part texture (for two sopranos, alto and tenor) with the hymn melody in the alto line
10. Romans 8:11 in a five-part setting similar to 2
11. Chorale verse 6 in a four-part harmonization

It is a mark of Bach's consummate skill as a craftsman that he was able to draw together what may once have been an unrelated collection of movements to create a unified masterpiece. There seems little, on the face of it, to link the hymn with St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans but, since no original source material has been handed down we are, once again, left speculating over the motet's genesis and, as ever, remaining in the dark concerning the occasion or occasions which prompted its performance. The once held view that the work was sung on 2nd July 1723, shortly after Bach's appointment as Kantor, at the funeral service of Johanna Maria Rappold, the wealthy widow of a former head postmaster, Johann Jakob Kees, is widely discounted.

In addition to its symmetry, pleasing rather than fearful, perhaps, "Jesu, meine Freude" is striking for the strength and clarity of its word-painting. Such instances occur, for example, in the rests after "nichts" (none), and in the vivid setting of "tobe, Welt, und springe" (rage, world and shatter). Passages such as these, remarks the scholar Hans-Joachim Marx, reveal Bach as a profound 'musicus poeticus' who was attempting to move, entertain and instruct his audience.

*Nicholas Anderson © 2023*

# Jesu, meine Freude

BWV 227

Choral

Johann Sebastian Bach  
Weise: Johann Crüger, 1653

1. Je - su, mei - ne Freu - de, mei - nes Her - zens Wei - de,  
{ach wie lang, ach lan - ge ist dem Her - zen ban - ge

1. Je - su, mei - ne Freu - de, mei - nes Her - zens Wei - de,  
{ach wie lang, ach lan - ge ist dem Her - zen ban - ge

8 1. Je - su, mei - ne Freu - de, mei - nes Her - zens Wei - de,  
{ach wie lang, ach lan - ge ist dem Her - zen ban - ge

1. Je - su, mei - ne Freu - de, mei - nes Her - zens Wei - de,  
{ach wie lang, ach lan - ge ist dem Her - zen ban - ge

5/11

Je - su, mei - ne Zier, { Got - tes Lamm, mein Bräu - ti - gam, au - ßer dir soll  
und ver - langt nach dir! }

Je - su, mei - ne Zier, { Got - tes Lamm, mein Bräu - ti - gam, au - ßer dir soll  
und ver - langt nach dir! }

8 Je - su, mei - ne Zier, { Got - tes Lamm, mein Bräu - ti - gam, au - ßer dir soll  
und ver - langt nach dir! }

Je - su, mei - ne Zier, { Got - tes Lamm, mein Bräu - ti - gam, au - ßer dir soll  
und ver - langt nach dir! }

16

mir auf Er - den nichts sonst Lie - bers wer - den.

mir auf Er - den nichts sonst Lie - bers wer - den.

8 mir auf Er - den nichts sonst Lie - bers wer - den.

mir auf Er - den nichts sonst Lie - bers wer - den.

## BACH: CANTATA “ICH ARMER MENSCH, ICH SÜNDENKNECHT”, BWV 55

As far as we know this was the only cantata which Bach wrote for a solo tenor; the attractive “Meine Seele rühmt und preist”, BWV 189, though long supposed to have been by Bach, was the work of Georg Melchior Hoffmann (1678/9-1715). He was a contemporary of Telemann at Leipzig, succeeding him both as director of the opera there, and of the student “Collegium Musicum”, which Bach himself took over in 1729. It appears certain from existing material that only the first two movements of Bach’s cantata were newly composed in 1726. The remaining sections are revisions of an unknown piece, perhaps an Oratorio.

Bach performed his cantata, “Ich armer Mensch, ich Südenknecht”, on the twenty-second Sunday after Trinity, in 1726. Its text, by an unidentified librettist, is concerned with the theme of guilt. Bach’s music is severe and makes exacting demands on the vocalist. In the opening G minor aria, scored for flute, oboe d’amore, violins in two parts and continuo, the vocal line hardly leaves the upper reaches of the tenor tessitura. By these means Bach accentuates both the urgency and the desperation of the sinner’s predicament. In the succeeding simple recitative there is an arresting moment at its close when, for emphasis, the word “Gott” is placed on a high B flat.

The second aria, in D minor, is more simply scored than the first, featuring only a flute with basso continuo. While the accent in the opening movement is placed on a philosophical reflection of guilt, here it is rather on supplication and an appeal for mercy: “Erbarme dich, lass die Tränen dich erweichen” (Have mercy, let the tears soften Thee). A second recitative, accompanied this time, and more extended than the first, speaks of the sinner’s prayer answered.

The cantata ends with a verse from a hymn by Johann Rist, dating from 1642; its melody, by Johann Schop, belongs to the same year, is straightforwardly harmonized by Bach and anticipates the same verse that concludes St. Peter’s denial in the St. Matthew Passion, first heard in the year following the performance of this cantata.

# TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

## BWV 82a - "Ich habe genug"

*Cantata for the Purification of Mary*

### 1. 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.

### 2. Recitative

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.

### 3. Aria

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.

### 4. Recitative

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!

### 5. Aria

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

### 1. Aria

I am satisfied,  
I have taken the Saviour, the hope of the righteous,  
into my eager arms;  
I am satisfied!  
I have beheld Him,  
my faith has pressed Jesus to my heart;  
now I wish, even today with joy  
to depart from here.

### 2. Recitative

I am satisfied.  
My comfort is this alone,  
that Jesus should 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 am satisfied.

### 3. 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 dwell in misery,  
but there, there I will see  
sweet peace, quiet rest.

### 4. Recitative

My God! When will the lovely 'now!' come,  
when I will depart in peace  
and into the cool soil of earth,  
and there, with You, rest in Your lap?  
My farewells are made,  
world, good night!

### 5. Aria

I am looking forward to my death,  
ah, if it were only present already!  
Then I will escape all the suffering  
that still binds me in the world.



## BWV 227 - "Jesu, meine Freude"

### 1. Chorale

Jesu, meine Freude,  
meines Herzens Weide,  
Jesu, meine Zier!  
Ach wie lang, ach lange,  
ist dem Herzen bange  
und verlangt nach dir!  
Gottes Lamm, mein Bräutigam,  
außer dir soll mir auf Erden  
nichts sonst Liebers werden.

### 2. Chorus

Es ist nun nichts Verdammliches an denen, die in  
Christo Jesu sind, die nicht nach dem Fleische  
wandeln, sondern nach dem Geist.

### 3. Chorale

Unter deinen Schirmen  
Bin ich für den Stürmen  
Aller Feinde frei.  
Laß den Satan wittern,  
Laß den Feind erbittern,  
Mir steht Jesus bei.  
Ob es itzt gleich kracht und blitzt,  
Ob gleich Sünd und Hölle schrecken,  
Jesus will mich decken.

### 4. Chorus

Denn das Gesetz des Geistes, der da lebendig  
machet in Christo Jesu, hat mich frei gemacht  
von dem Gesetz der Sünde und des Todes.

### 5. Chorale

Trotz dem alten Drachen,  
trotz des Todes Rachen,  
trotz der Furcht dazu!  
Tobe, Welt, und springe;  
ich steh hier und singe  
in gar sichrer Ruh!  
Gottes Macht hält mich in acht;  
Erd und Abgrund muß verstummen,  
ob sie noch so brummen.

### 6. Chorus

Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich, sondern geistlich,  
so anders Gottes Geist in euch wohnt. Wer  
aber Christi Geist nicht hat, der ist nicht sein.

### 7. Chorale

Weg mit allen Schätzen,  
du bist mein Ergötzen,  
Jesu, meine Lust!

### 1. Chorale

Jesus, my joy,  
my heart's pasture,  
Jesus, my treasure!  
Ah, how long, ah long  
has my heart suffered  
and longed for you!  
God's lamb, my bridegroom,  
besides You on earth  
nothing shall be dearer to me.

### 2. Chorus

Now there is nothing damnable in those who are  
in Christ Jesus, who do not walk after the way of  
the flesh, but after the way of the Spirit.

### 3. Chorale

Under your protection  
I am safe from the storms  
of all enemies.  
Let Satan rage,  
let the enemy fume,  
Jesus stands with me.  
Whether now it thunders and flashes,  
whether sin and Hell terrify,  
Jesus will protect me.

### 4. Chorus

For the law of the spirit, which gives life in  
Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law  
of sin and death.

### 5. Chorale

Defiance to the old dragon,  
defiance to the vengeance of death,  
defiance to fear as well!  
Rage, world, and attack;  
I stand here and sing  
in entirely secure peace!  
God's strength holds me in watch;  
earth and abyss must fall silent,  
however much they might rumble.

### 6. Chorus

You, however, are not of the flesh, but rather of  
the Spirit, since the Spirit of God lives otherwise  
in you. Anyone, however, who does not have  
Christ's Spirit, is not His.

### 7. Chorale

Away with all treasures,  
you are my delight,  
Jesus, my joy!

Weg, ihr eitlen Ehren,  
ich mag euch nicht hören,  
bleibt mir unbewußt!  
Elend, Not, Kreuz, Schmach und Tod  
soll mich, ob ich viel muß leiden,  
nicht von Jesu scheiden.

#### 8. Chor

So aber Christus in euch ist, so ist der Leib zwar  
tot um der Sünde willen; der Geist aber ist das  
Leben um der Gerechtigkeit willen.

#### 9. Chorale

Gute Nacht, o Wesen,  
Das die Welt erlesen!  
Mir gefällt du nicht.  
Gute Nacht, ihr Sünden,  
Bleibet weit dahinten,  
Kommt nicht mehr ans Licht!  
Gute Nacht, du Stolz und Pracht!  
Dir sei ganz, du Lasterleben,  
Gute Nacht gegeben!

#### 10. Chorus

So nun der Geist des, der Jesum von den  
Toten auferwecket hat, in euch wohnet, so  
wird auch derselbige, der Christum von den  
Toten auferwecket hat, eure sterblichen Leiber  
lebendig machen, um des willen, daß sein Geist  
in euch wohnet.

#### 11. Chorale

Weicht, ihr Trauergeister,  
denn mein Freudenmeister,  
Jesus, tritt herein.  
Denen, die Gott lieben,  
muß auch ihr Betrüben  
lauter Zucker sein.  
Duld' ich schon hier Spott und Hohn,  
dennoch bleibst du auch im Leide,  
Jesu, meine Freude.

Away, you vain honours,  
I don't want to listen to you,  
remain unknown to me!  
Misery, want, torture, shame and death  
shall, although I must suffer much,  
never part me from Jesus.

#### 8. Chor

However if Christ is in you, then the body is dead  
indeed for the sake of sin; but the spirit is life for  
the sake of righteousness.

#### 9. Chorale

Good night, existence  
that cherishes the world!  
You do not please me.  
Good night, sins,  
stay far away,  
never again come to light!  
Good night, pride and glory!  
To you utterly, life of corruption,  
be good night given!

#### 10. Chorus

Therefore now since the Spirit of Him who raised  
Jesus from the dead dwells in you, that same  
who raised Christ from the dead will make your  
mortal bodies living, for the sake of His spirit that  
dwells in you.

#### 11. Chorale

Hence, you spirits of sadness,  
for my Master of joy,  
Jesus, comes here.  
For those who love God,  
even their troubles  
must be pure sugar.  
Though I endure mockery and shame here  
already,  
nevertheless you stay with me even in sorrow,  
Jesus, my joy.

## BWV 55 - "Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht"

*Cantata for the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity*

#### 1. Aria

Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht,  
Ich geh vor Gottes Angesichte  
Mit Furcht und Zittern zum Gerichte.  
Er ist gerecht, ich ungerecht.  
Ich armer Mensch, ich Sündenknecht!

#### 1. Aria

I pitiful man, I slave of sin,  
I go before the face of God  
with fear and trembling for judgment.  
He is righteous, I am unjust.  
I pitiful man, I slave of sin!

## 2. Recitative

Ich habe wider Gott gehandelt  
Und bin demselben Pfad,  
Den er mir vorgeschrieben hat,  
Nicht nachgewandelt.  
Wohin? soll ich der Morgenröte Flügel  
Zu meiner Flucht erkiesen,  
Die mich zum letzten Meere wiesen,  
So wird mich doch die Hand des Allerhöchsten  
finden  
Und mir die Sündenrute binden.  
Ach ja!  
Wenn gleich die Hölle ein Bette  
Vor mich und meine Sünden hätte,  
So wäre doch der Grimm des Höchsten da.  
Die Erde schützt mich nicht,  
Sie droht mich Scheusal zu verschlingen;  
Und will ich mich zum Himmel schwingen,  
Da wohnt Gott, der mir das Urteil spricht.

## 3. Aria

Erbarme dich!  
Laß die Tränen dich erweichen,  
Laß sie dir zu Herzen reichen;  
Laß um Jesu Christi willen  
Deinen Zorn des Eifers stillen!  
Erbarme dich!

## 4. Recitative

Erbarme dich!  
Jedoch nun  
Tröst ich mich,  
Ich will nicht für Gerichte stehen  
Und lieber vor dem Gnadenthron  
Zu meinem frommen Vater gehen.  
Ich halt ihm seinen Sohn,  
Sein Leiden, sein Erlösen für,  
Wie er für meine Schuld  
Bezahlt und genug getan,  
Und bitt ihn um Geduld,  
Hinfüro will ich's nicht mehr tun.  
So nimmst mich Gott zu Gnaden wieder an.

## 5. Chorale

Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen,  
Stell ich mich doch wieder ein;  
Hat uns doch dein Sohn verglichen  
Durch sein Angst und Todespein.  
Ich verleugne nicht die Schuld,  
Aber deine Gnad und Huld  
Ist viel größer als die Sünde,  
Die ich stets bei mir befinde.

## 2. Recitative

I have acted against God  
and that same path  
that He has prescribed for me,  
I have not travelled.  
Where? Shall I choose the wings of the dawn  
for my flight,  
that will take me to the utmost ocean,  
yet the hand of the Almighty shall find me  
and bind the switch of sin for me.  
Alas yes!  
Even if Hell contained a bed  
for me and my sins,  
yet the wrath of the Highest would be there.  
The earth does not shield me,  
it threatens to devour me, a monster;  
and if I wish to soar to heaven,  
God lives there, who speaks the judgment  
against me

## 3. Aria

Have mercy!  
Let tears soften You,  
let them reach into Your heart;  
may, for the sake of Jesus Christ,  
the zeal of Your anger be quieted!  
Have mercy!

## 4. Recitative

Have mercy!  
However now  
I am comforted,  
I will not stand before judgment  
but rather before the throne of grace  
go to my holy Father.  
I hold His Son up to Him ,  
His Passion, His Redemption,  
how He, for my guilt  
has paid and done enough,  
and ask Him for patience,  
from henceforth I will do this no more.  
Then God will take me into His grace again.

## 5. Chorale

Even if I have strayed from You,  
yet I return again;  
since Your Son has paid for us  
through His anguish and mortal pain.  
I do not deny my guilt,  
but Your grace and mercy  
is much greater than the sin  
that I constantly discover in me.

## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

# TOM HAMMOND-DAVIES



John Hunt

Tom is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Oxford Bach Soloists.

Since graduating in music from the University of Oxford, Tom has become a leading specialist in choral conducting. He studied with Paul Spicer at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and has gone on to gain a reputation as one of the top choral conductors in the world.

In 2015, he founded the Oxford Bach Soloists a unique ensemble with a mission to perform the complete works of J.S. Bach chronologically, programmed in real-time, and in the context in which they were originally received – be that in terms of liturgical and ecclesiastical settings or instrument and choir positionings.

Tom leads the baroque ensemble and singers performing concerts that are heralded around the world, capturing the imagination of existing and new Bach enthusiasts as well as supporting the next generation of soloists.

Tom was not an immediate convert to Bach. Singing and playing Bach as a child and teenager, he initially found them uninspiring and difficult. But that all changed when he started singing some of the Lutheran chorales – then Bach's ingenuity shone through, and with it began a lifelong appreciation.

The first of the vocal works was performed by the OBS in 2017 – it is currently a quarter of the way through its project.

Tom has also appeared on the BBC's Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, at the Three Choirs Festival and at the Oxford Lieder Festival.

His other roles include: Trustee of the Sir George Dyson Trust; Director of Music at the City Church of St Michael at the North Gate, Oxford; Director of Music at Mansfield College, Oxford; and a member of Faculty for the Oxford Cultural Leaders programme.



## TENOR SOLOIST **NICK PRITCHARD**

Born in West Sussex, Nick Pritchard was an inaugural member of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's (OAE) 'Rising Stars' scheme and is a Samling artist. Described as a 'Masterly Evangelist' in The Guardian, he has sung the role in Bach's St John and Matthew Passions around the world.

On the concert platform he has performed ensembles including Concerto Köln, Les Talens Lyriques, Les Violons du Roy, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, English Concert, Early Opera Company, Philharmonia Orchestra, The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra, Early Opera Company, La Nuova Musica at the BBC Proms, L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris.

Nick is an avid recitalist, and has given recitals at the Wigmore Hall and Oxford and Leeds Lieder. He has given many world premieres, including creating the role of Matthew in Mark Simpson's opera *Pleasure* (Opera North, Aldeburgh and The Royal Opera House), Daniel Kidane's *Songs of Illumination* (with Ian Tindale at the Leeds Lieder Festival) and *Sleepsinging* by Cassandra Miller (with David Bates and La Nuova Music at Wigmore Hall).



ORGAN

## DÓNAL MCCANN

Originally from Belfast, Dónal is the Assistant Organist at New College, Oxford. At New College, Dónal is involved in all aspects of musical life, and last term took up the post of Acting Organist. Before moving to New College to take up the post of Assistant Organist in 2020, he was an organ scholar at King's College, Cambridge, where he read music, graduating with a double first. At King's, he accompanied the choir in daily chapel services, as well as in recordings, tours and broadcasts, including the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.

In addition to his work at New College, Dónal maintains a busy freelance schedule, having given many recitals in the UK and abroad. Recent collaborations include with the Instruments of Time & Truth, and appearing as a guest soloist with the Ulster Orchestra and Academy of Ancient Music. His debut solo album, 'Bach & Walther: Concerto Transcriptions', performed on the New College organ, is now available for purchase.



# WITH THANKS

The Warden and Scholars of  
New College, Oxford

Erica Longfellow  
Tom Mungall  
Simon Neal  
Robert Quinney  
Nancy-Jane Rucker  
Nick Rutter

We would also like to offer our sincere thanks to everyone who has renewed their OBS Friends Membership over the past year. Your support has been invaluable to the organisation, allowing us to flourish through trying times.

A full list of current Friends is available on our website.



For more information about how to become a partner, please contact  
Katie Ambrose, General Manager: [katie@oxfordbachsoloists.com](mailto:katie@oxfordbachsoloists.com)



# SUPPORT OBS

Oxford Bach Soloists fulfils its unique mission to perform the vocal works of J. S. Bach without any public subsidy. We rely entirely on ticket sales and the generous support of our patrons, friends and sponsors to maintain the high quality of our performances. Please consider supporting us by joining the Friends of OBS, or making a contribution to our Annual Fund. Details of how to give are shown below. Or call us to discuss how you can become more involved with OBS.

**Katie Ambrose**

[katie@oxfordbachsoloists.com](mailto:katie@oxfordbachsoloists.com)

## WAYS TO SUPPORT

You can support OBS by:

**Joining the Friends** (see overleaf)

**Sponsor a Choral Scholar**

£1,000 per year

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**Leave a Legacy**

Contact us for more details of how your gift can make a substantial difference to the future of OBS.



# FRIENDS

Founded in January 2015, Oxford Bach Soloists has catapulted itself to the top drawer of ensembles in the world with one clear, simple aim: to perform the complete vocal works of J. S. Bach over 12 years in chronological order. We are incredibly grateful to our loyal following. Without you, none of what we do would be possible. We want to build on our success, and we invite you to join us on our journey to secure our future by becoming a Friend of OBS.

From just £8.33 a month (£6.66 + Gift Aid), your support as our Friend will enable historians and scholars to discover more about Bach's music and influence, nurture the next generation of outstanding performers, and preserve this unique art form with integrity, performing in a regular cycle throughout the year.

Your gift will go towards the funding of the Oxford Bach Soloists: the singers, the orchestra, the administrative support, the educational projects, music lessons, language coaching sessions, tours and recordings, and special projects.

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