



Bach Beat

The Newsletter of the Bach Cantata Choir



November 2018

www.bachcantatachoir.org

Vol. 12, No. 2

St. Cecilia, Patroness of Music
Opening Concert 2018-19 Season
Sunday, November 18, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.
Harvest and Holiday Market to follow concert

Johann Sebastian Bach: Cantata No. 116, "Du Friedefürst, Herr Jesu Christ"

Henry Purcell: "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day, 1692"

Heinrich Schütz: Psalm 100, "Jauchzet dem Herren alle Welt"

All Bach Cantata Choir concerts are held at the Rose City Park Presbyterian Church at the corner of NE 44th & Sandy (office address 1907 NE 45th Ave) in Portland, Oregon ([map](#)). Admission is free unless advertised otherwise.
Free-will offerings gratefully accepted.

We're Bach!

By John Chilgren, Bass

Yes, the Bach Cantata Choir has returned from the land of **J. S. Bach** in eastern Germany to begin our 14th season with music of great German masters as well as England's greatest Baroque composer. At this first concert of the 2018-19 season, attendees will have an opportunity to participate in our annual Harvest and Holiday Market in the basement of the church.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

In 1724 **J. S. Bach** composed his Cantata 116, *Du Friedefürst, Herr Jesu Christ* (Thou Prince of Peace, Lord Jesus Christ) for the 25th Sunday after Trinity. It was therefore written within the first 18 months of Bach's arrival in Leipzig. Cantata 116 is one of the surviving chorale cantatas, i.e., a cantata in which the hymn serves as both tune and text with the first and last movements of the cantata being based on the first and last stanzas of a hymn, respectively. In this instance the hymn was written by Jacob Ebert (1549-1615), the song-poet and professor of theology at the University of Frankfurt. It was scored for four-part chorus as well as oboe, strings, and continuo and follows Bach's cantata recipe: Chorale, Aria, Recitative, Aria, and Chorale.

The first movement, a lively and optimistic chorale with the *cantus firmus* sung by the soprano section, is then followed by a contrasting second movement, a poignant alto aria. With the oboe accompaniment, Bach captures the somber mood as the alto sings "Alas, the agony is unspeakable ..." as the soloist contemplates the dread of coming judgment. The fourth movement is the heart of the work and is a surprising terzetto (trio of soprano, tenor, bass) that is heard in only a few of the 200 extant Bach cantatas. It is accompanied only by an organ continuo and is the longest of all the movements. In in this contrapuntal aria the singers plead for understanding while recognizing their guilt. The cantata concludes on an upbeat mode, much like the opening chorale, in a hymn that is still sung in Lutheran churches today.

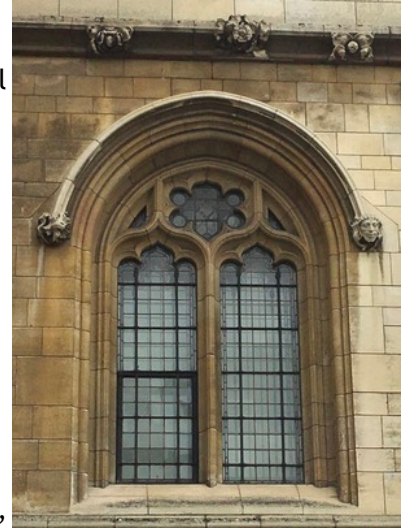
Henry Purcell (ca. 1659-1695)

Saint Cecilia is the focus of the work by **Henry Purcell**, England's greatest Baroque composer. Being the patroness of

music (who knows how or when this title was ascribed to her), she has become a much celebrated saint; the first English feast in her name was conducted in 1683. The pens of poets and composers have been busy with works dedicated to her, including Handel, Gounod, Charpentier, Britten, and in this concert Purcell as the choir performs *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, Z328 (1692). Her feast day is November 22.

There is more legend than historical fact regarding Cecilia, although she is generally recognized as an early Roman martyr. Supposedly, she sang in her heart as well as with her voice and since Renaissance times is portrayed with a viola or small organ. In this instance, the appearance of an organ can be traced to a mistranslation of an ancient manuscript depicting the Acts of the Martyrs. In it is written “...cantantibus organis illa in cordo suo sol domino decantabat” meaning while instruments were playing, she was singing in her heart to God alone. The collective word for instruments is *organis*, not organ, but some myths die hard. For those wanting to read the entire legend of St. Cecilia, they may visit online *The Second Nun's Tale* as part of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer (1343-1400) is known as England's greatest poet of the Middle Ages, the father of English literature and the first poet to be buried in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey.

Henry Purcell was most likely born in 1659 in Westminster, then a separate city about three miles west of London. His father (also Henry) and uncle (Thomas) were both professional musicians during the time of King Charles II, being Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal and who were paid singers for church services of the British monarch. Henry the elder died in 1664 so it is assumed that the son was supported by Thomas. Virtually nothing is known of the younger Henry's youth and musical training until his early teens when he became a chorister in the Chapel Royal and in 1673 was appointed assistant to **John Hingston** (1612-83), the keeper of the King's musical instruments, later succeeding Hingston a decade later. At about age 15 he knew how to tune the organ at Westminster Abbey and a few years later was admitted as a composer for violins and in 1677 succeeded Matthew Locke as composer for King Charles' string orchestra. Then, in 1679, he succeeded composer **John Blow** as organist at Westminster, a position he held throughout his short life. About this time he is known to have published his first collection of five songs. Soon he would marry and eventually father six children, three of whom would die in infancy. However, a son (Edward) and grandson (Edward Henry) became organists in London as well. Henry's brother, Daniel, was also a creative Purcell, being involved in London stage productions until the arrival of Italian opera. Purcell is known to have been influenced by the works of several composers: **Orlando Gibbons** (1583-1625), **William Byrd** (1542-1623), **Thomas Tallis** (1510-85) as well as **Matthew Locke** (1622-77) and **John Blow** (1649-1708).



Purcell's works cover a multitude of musical genres: sacred music, stage and theater music, opera (*Dido and Aeneas*), incidental music, dances and songs for many plays, verse and full anthems for the Church of England, settings of sacred poems by contemporary writers and many more. His most productive period, 1670-1695, includes the ode presented at this concert, *Hail, Bright Cecilia* (1692), music for *The Fairy Queen* (1692) based on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and an unfinished work, *The Indian Queen*. The cause of his death on November 21, 1695, is unknown. Purcell is buried adjacent to the organ in Westminster Abbey, his home for so many years. At his funeral, music he had earlier composed for Queen Mary's funeral was performed as well. Purcell was universally mourned as 'a very great master of music.' Following his death, the officials at Westminster paid him great respect by unanimously voting that he be buried with no expense in the north aisle of the Abbey. His epitaph reads: "Here lyes Henry Purcell Esq., who left this life and is gone to that blessed place where only his harmony can be exceeded."

Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)

The most significant German Baroque composer before J. S. Bach was **Heinrich Schütz** born October 18, 1585 (100 years before Bach) in Bad Köstritz, Germany before his family moved to Weissenfels in 1590. Having received musical training from his father, the local Cantor and organist for several years, young Schütz was "discovered" by Maurice Moritz (The Learned) of Hesse-Kassel, a nobleman of the Holy Roman Empire and also a patron of the arts, being a composer himself. He took responsibility for young Heinrich's education and sent him to Venice in 1609 to study with **Giovanni Gabrieli** where he excelled at composing as well as at the organ. By 1613 he was second organist at the Moritz court.

His life would soon change. Elector Johann Georg I of Saxony eventually persuaded Moritz to allow Schütz to join the Dresden court, eventually on a permanent basis. Now as *Capellmeister*, Schütz began to compose ceremonial music, supervise the musical training of the choirboys, and expand his musical influence, such as that by overseeing the centenary of the Reformation in 1617. In the ensuing years he published many more works, such as sacred music and the opera *Dafne*. He married in 1619 only to see his wife die six years later. He never remarried.

The work heard at this concert, Psalm 100 "Jauchzet dem Herren, alle Welt" SWV 36, was part of his 1619 collection of sacred works (*Psalmen Davids sampt etlichen Moteten und Concerten* (SWV 22-47), dedicated to Lord Moritz, Landgrave of Hesse.

Schütz traveled to Italy again in 1628 to study with **Claudio Monteverdi** (1567-1643) who had become *maestro di cappella* of St. Mark's. Returning to Dresden in 1629, Schütz continued to publish and received permission to take a temporary position in Denmark in late 1633. Four years later he obtained a five-year copyright privilege from King Ferdinand III to prevent unauthorized reprints of his compositions. His opera-ballet *Orpheus und Euridice* was performed in 1638 to celebrate the marriage of Prince Johann Georg and Princess Magdalena Sybilla of Brandenburg. The next 18 years were turbulent given the problems at the Dresden court but he was able to obtain a pension from Johann Georg II after composing one of his best works, the *Symphoniarum sacrarum tertia pars* in 1650. Moving to Weissenfels and then later to Dresden in 1670, he had planned his own funeral prior to his death on November 6, 1672. Both services and entombment, next to his wife, occurred in the old *Frauenkirche*. Sadly, this tomb, among many others, was destroyed when the old *Frauenkirche* was torn down to be rebuilt beginning in 1726. Once again destroyed in 1945, the *Frauenkirche* underwent plans for reconstruction in 1992, reaching completion in 2005. The Bach Cantata Choir sang in this church in the summer of 2018.

Schütz wrote at least 500 works covering almost every genre: motets, madrigals, psalms, sacred symphonies, wedding and funeral music, an oratorio and a vast collection of sacred songs. There is an abundance of archival material relating to court life in Dresden and the life of Schütz, the central figure of the city's musical life at the time. He wrote the first German opera and was the first German composer to enjoy an international attention and yet his music is still largely unknown to Western audiences.

John Chilgren sings with the Bach Cantata Choir and for many years with the Portland Symphonic Choir and Choral Arts Ensemble. He plays clarinet with a Portland marching band.

Thank you!

We appreciate the generosity of all who support the Bach Cantata Choir.

Join our Growing List of Season Sponsors!

Sponsorships are now available at four levels. To become a sponsor, visit our [website](#).

Bach Cantata Choir

3570 NE Mathison Place
Portland OR 97212

www.bachcantatachoir.org

Artistic Director
Ralph Nelson

Accompanist
John Vergin

Board of Directors

President
Ralph Nelson

Vice President
Woody Richen

Secretary
Emily Rampton

Treasurer
Julie Beck

Members at Large
Don Coates
Jim Hook
Barbara Lance

Harvest and Holiday Market

The audience is invited to attend the Harvest and Holiday Market, which will be held immediately after the November 18 concert. Come downstairs and check out the baked goodies and homemade gift items that await you!

There will be cookies and other baked goods available for snacking.

Concert notes:

No tickets required. A free-will offering will be accepted.

The church's parking lot is very small and fills up quickly. Please allow time to find on-street parking.

(No concert parking in the Grocery Outlet lot.)

The church has an elevator accessible from its parking lot,

Sue Nelson

facing Sandy Blvd.

The Bach Cantata Choir's mission is to sing the entire set of cantatas by Johann Sebastian Bach over a period of 30 years.

The Bach Cantata Choir is a legally organized non-profit corporation under Oregon law, and is a registered 501(c)(3) corporation with the IRS. Donations to the choir are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law and regulation.

The *BachBeat* newsletter is published cyclically by the Bach Cantata Choir.

Emily Rampton, Editor

[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

[Click here](#) to forward this email to a friend

Bach Cantata Choir
3570 NE Mathison Place
Portland, OR 97212
USA

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

vertical DELIVERED BY
response
Try It Free Today!