

Like 0

Share

Tweet

Share

# Bach Beat

The Newsletter of the Bach Cantata Choir

May 2018

[www.bachcantatachoir.org](http://www.bachcantatachoir.org)

Vol. 11, No. 5



## *Best of Both Worlds*

**Sunday, May 6, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.**

*"And this choir does seem to rejoice so in singing." - Bruce Browne*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *BWV 105 Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht*

Isabella Leonarda: *Dixit Dominum*

Josef Rheinberger: *Abendlieder*

Edward Eicker (traditional, arr.): *Steal Away to Jesus*

Rollo Dilworth (traditional, arr.): *Didn't it Rain*

Morten Lauridsen: *O Nata Lux*

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](#)).

*Free will offerings gratefully accepted.*

***Besser spät als nie (Better late than never)***  
**After 13 seasons, we are going to Germany!**

By John Chilgren—Bass

In just over a month, the Bach Cantata Choir will embark on its first international tour to Germany, visiting and performing in cities and churches where Johann Sebastian Bach worked, taught, and performed. In this final concert of the 2017-18 season, music to be sung and performed will include not only some of Europe's best composers but also contemporary American composer/arrangers as well. Join us for a delightful smorgasbord of inspiring music from home and abroad.



### **Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**

J. S. Bach is now in his first year in Leipzig, having secured the position of cantor at Thomaskirche in April 1723. In late May he begins his first cantata cycle. *BWV 105 Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht* was written in July for the ninth Sunday after Trinity and performed on July 25, 1723. Consisting of six movements and scored for four-part choir, horn, two oboes, viola, violin, and basso continuo, it's an inspirational cantata, despite the intense theological message of waiting for God's judgment, hopefully passing the final test by forgoing all earthly pleasures and mammon (false gods and preoccupation with affluence). The opening chorus, with its masterful use of suspensions and counterpoint, displays the tension and suspense in waiting for judgment day (*Lord, enter not into judgment with your servant*). The stunning soprano solo describes the torment of a conscience never reconciled to righteousness. In the final chorale, which is the 11th verse of the hymn *Jesu, der du meine Seele* (Jesus, You, who are my soul), Bach

employs a number of musical devices to convey the progress of an agonized conscience to a sense of peaceful transition to surrender and in the words of John Eliot Gardiner, "a release of the spirit from its earthly encasement."

### **Anna Isabella Leonarda (1620-1704)**

The Lombardy region of northern Italy is today the most populated and richest (in terms of Italy's GDP) area of Italy and includes the culturally rich artistic cities of Milan, Mantua, and Cremona, as well as the town of Novara ("new area") founded by the Romans more than 1,700 years ago. In the Italian Baroque era, among the most prominent musicians were the cloistered nuns of Lombardy and one in particular who would become the most productive female composer of the Baroque era:



Anna Isabella Leonarda was born in 1620 to parents who were descendants of an old and prominent Novarese family and who held important church and civic offices (her father was a count and a doctor of laws). Isabella's early musical training is unknown but after entering the prestigious Ursuline convent at the Collegio di Sant'Orsola in 1636, where she remained throughout her long life, she may have studied with the talented but little-known composer Gasparo Casati (1610-1641). Casati was maestro di capella at the Novara cathedral from 1635 until his death. One of Casati's works, *Terzo libro di sacri concerti* performed in Milan in 1640, included two of Leonarda's earliest compositions. Owing to the financial patronage of the Leonarda family with the convent, Isabella wielded considerable influence, occupying several positions of authority such as madre (1676), superiora (1686), madre vucarua (1693) and consigliera (1700) in addition to being identified as *magistra musicae*, a teacher of music. These positions presumably enabled her to teach other nuns to perform as well as to have her own compositions performed by the convent's nuns. The convent was situated in a fashionable part of the city; it attracted students from distinguished local families and became known for the musical prowess of the nuns, two of whom were known to have motets of Isabella dedicated to them as "musical virtuosos."

About half of her 200 known compositions were dedicated to the Virgin Mary but others to specific individuals including the archbishop of Milan, the bishop of Novara, and Emperor Leopold I. It wasn't unusual that dedicatees be acknowledged for the financial support they provided. Her compositions spanned some 60 years beginning in 1640 and ending in 1700. Most of her works were unknown outside Lombardy although a few made it to France where the writer, composer and music collector Sebastien de Brossard, a vicar at the Strasbourg Cathedral (1687) and founder of the Académie de Musique at Strasbourg, was in the process of amassing a large collection of Italian music. In his renowned catalogue of music now in France's National Library, he writes of Isabella Leonarda: "All the works of this illustrious and incomparable Isabella Leonarda are so beautiful, so gracious, and at the same time so learned and wise that my great regret is not having all of them." Leonarda's works include examples of nearly every sacred genre: Motets and sacred concertos, sacred Latin dialogues, psalm settings, Magnificats, litanies, masses, among others. She also wrote a few sacred solo songs with vernacular texts. The sacred motet *Dixit Dominus* sung at the May concert is derived from Psalm 19.

### **Josef Rheinberger (1839-1901)**

On March 17, 1839, in Liechtenstein's capital city of Vaduz, was born Josef Rheinberger, one of Germany's most notable and successful musicians. A child prodigy, he was already an organist in his church in Vaduz at age 7 but after the family moved to Munich where he would spend most of his life, he entered the Academy of Music at age 12 to study with Franz Lachner, a close associate of Franz Schubert, and would go on to compose more than 100 works before the age of 20! Among these compositions is the sacred motet *Abendlied* (Evening Song), the first version written at age 15. It would be revised nine years later and published in 1873 as part of three sacred songs for mixed choir. It is his best known sacred motet and is performed at this concert. The audience will notice musical similarities to that of his contemporary, Johannes Brahms.



The organ would eventually be the medium best suited to Rheinberger's genius and temperament, and he is now regarded as one of the best organ composers of the 19th century. At age 20 he began to teach piano and later organ and composition at Munich's Royal Conservatory of Music, a position he retained until shortly before his death in 1901. Among the hundreds of students he taught were Englebert Humperdinck and

Wilhelm Furtwängler, conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic for 23 years.

Rheinberger's works include piano and organ music, church and secular choral music, solo songs, chamber music, symphonies, concert overtures and music for theater and opera. He was one of the most successful composers of his time. His birth home in Vaduz now houses the Liechtenstein Music School.

#### **Edward Eicker (1975- )**



At least two African-American spirituals by award-winning composer/arrangers will be performed at this concert. The first work that the audience will recognize is the beautiful *Steal Away to Jesus* arranged by Edward Eicker (b. 1975) who is currently organist and choir director at St Paul of the Cross Church in Park Ridge, IL. He holds a B.M. in Organ Performance and an M.A. in Music Composition from Roosevelt University. He has published more than 30 works for choir, organ and instrumentals.

#### **Rollo Dilworth (1970- )**

Another spiritual, *Didn't It Rain*, is an example of a traditional spiritual based on the Old Testament. Arranged by the dynamic teacher, writer, and composer Rollo Dilworth (b. 1970), currently an Associate Professor of Choral Music Education at Temple University's Boyer College of Music in Philadelphia where he conducts the University Chorale, this work displays the clever interplay of a baritone soloist with the choir in which audience participation is needed! Dilworth holds a Doctor of Music in conducting performance from Northwestern University. He has written several choral textbooks and composed or arranged more than 150 works and is much in demand as a guest conductor around the globe. His research interests include African-American music as well as music education curriculum.



#### **Morten Lauridsen (1943- )**

There is probably no greater living American composer than Morten Lauridsen (born 1943). A National Medal of Arts recipient (2007), he was composer-in-residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale (1994-2001) and has been a professor of composition at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music for more than 40 years. His works have been showcased throughout the world with more than 200 CDs and five Grammy nominations.

Lauridsen was born in Washington state and raised in Beaverton, Oregon, where he was in the first graduating class at Sunset High (1961). He then attended Whitman College before moving on to USC. Very popular in the Pacific Northwest, his music has been performed frequently by various choral groups including the Portland Symphonic Choir. *O Nata Lux*, from his masterpiece *Lux Aeterna* (1997) will be performed at this concert.



---

John Chilgren sings bass with the Bach Cantata Choir; he formerly sang with the Portland Symphonic Choir and Choral Arts Ensemble. For 20 years he was pianist and choral director of three SW United Methodist Churches and has been a book and film reviewer for over 45 years.

---

# 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 three levels (below). To become a sponsor, visit our [website](#).

<b>Friends of the Choir</b> (\$100-249) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognition on our website and program.</li><li>• Invitation to special events, including "Bach-Sing" day carol sing on Dec. 26 and an event in the spring.</li></ul>	<b>Director's Circle</b> (\$250-499) <b>Composer's Circle</b> (\$500+) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All the benefits available to Friends of the Choir.</li><li>• Two tickets to the Baroque Holiday Concert.</li></ul>
---	---

## Recommended Reading

A regular member of our audience has published a book that will be of great interest to the choir members who are touring Germany this summer. George Fox Professor Emeritus of Religion Roger J. Newell's *Keine Gewalt! No Violence!* discusses the important role of Leipzig's Nicholaikirche (St. Nicholas Church) in Germany's reunification.

"A study tour to Leipzig in the former East Germany (GDR) raised new questions for Roger Newell about the long struggle of the Protestant church with the German state in the twentieth century. How was it possible that a church, unable to stop the Nazis, helped bring a totalitarian government to its knees fifty years later?" — Amazon

<https://www.amazon.com/Keine-Gewalt-Non-violent-Reunification-Germany/dp/1532612842>

The Bach Cantata Choir is scheduled to sing in the Nicholaikirche on June 21.

### Concert notes for May 6

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

The church's parking lot is small and fills up quickly. Please allow time to find on-street parking. (*No concert parking at Grocery Outlet.*) Elevator available from church parking lot on Sandy Blvd.

## Bach Cantata Choir

3570 NE Mathison Place  
Portland OR 97212

[www.bachcantatachoir.org](http://www.bachcantatachoir.org)

**Artistic Director**  
Ralph Nelson

**Assistant Conductor**  
Emma M. Riggle

**Accompanist**  
John Vergin

### Board of Directors

*President*  
Ralph Nelson

*Secretary*  
Emily Rampton

*Treasurer*  
Julie Beck

*Members at Large*  
Don Coates  
Jim Hook  
Barbara Lance  
Pat Messick  
Sue Nelson  
Woody Richen

## Helping Hands

The choir needs volunteers to assist at concerts and related events. Volunteers might serve as ushers, handing out programs or helping with elevator operation. Several individuals have already stepped into these roles but we can use more. If you are interested, please contact us:

Email: [info@BachCantataChoir.org](mailto:info@BachCantataChoir.org)

Phone: (503) 702-1973

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!