

BachBeat

The Newsletter of the Bach Cantata Choir



October 2011

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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.

Newsletter

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www.bachcantatachoir.org

The “other” Vivaldi Gloria

By Dorothea Lail – Soprano

“Vivaldi’s *Gloria*? Sure.” Every fan of baroque or choral music can probably hum those famous opening octaves or recall the galloping rhythm of the *Domine Fili*. While these are parts of *the Vivaldi Gloria*, the Vivaldi music catalogue lists another *Gloria* under RV 588. Like the famous RV 589, RV 588 is D major, its character and subdivision into movements is similar, and the last movement sounds very familiar but this is basically where the commonalities end.

Being listed before the famous *Gloria* doesn’t necessarily mean that the other *Gloria* was written earlier. Musicologists are still piecing together what has survived from Vivaldi’s music for a thorough analysis of his work and a chronological order. Printing music in Vivaldi’s time was very expensive since each single note had to be etched by hand in mirrored form into metal plates that then served as type settings. (In fact, only relatively recently have computer programs made that tedious work unnecessary.) Therefore publishers would only print what they knew they could sell. Copyrights were unknown, so music was often published without the composer’s knowledge (to say nothing of royalties). Or when it was published, it might appear in a collection under the name of a more famous (at least at the time) composer. A lot of today’s work analyzing Vivaldi’s music is sorting out which is genuine Vivaldi and what was ascribed to him by smart publishers who wanted to increase their sales numbers. Music that didn’t find grace with the

publishers would be perhaps manually copied by interested musicians. Other musicians would make copies of those copies, naturally with all the mistakes that come with it. For most of the music written in that time, there was never more than the composer’s autograph.

Like J.S. Bach, Vivaldi’s style went out of fashion toward the end of his life when younger composers began to move away from Baroque principles toward the early Classical Style. The audience wanted to hear the latest and greatest. New editions of old music were almost never published, so very soon the major part of Vivaldi’s music was forgotten. In many cases it wasn’t till the 1930s and 40s that musicologists started to re-discover Baroque composers beyond J.S. Bach and to catalogue their works. For Vivaldi’s opus, several catalogues have been put together. In 1974, the Danish musicologist

Peter Ryom published his catalogue, which has become the most popular (this is where the “RV” in front of the catalog numbers for Vivaldi’s music comes from). Since many original sources do not show any dates, the order of the catalogue is somehow arbitrary (like in the famous Mozart catalogue KV and J.S. Bach’s BWV).

The autograph of the “other” *Gloria* (RV 588) is one of the sources that wasn’t dated by Vivaldi. Certain indications in the way it is written imply that Vivaldi composed this *Gloria* in the years after 1713 when he was covering the post of choir director at the orphanage in Venice after Francesco Gasparini had left. However, Vivaldi never officially took over as choir director since it was a demanding position that did not quite fit with his preferred schedule. He was



concentrating on writing operas and travelled a lot so there was no time to compose two motets per month and two masses and vespers per year, which was expected in addition to rehearsing and conducting frequent performances.*

One reason why *Gloria* RV 588 isn't as popular as RV 589 is probably its particular form that renders it impractical for liturgical use. Following a common practice of this time, Vivaldi added an *Introduzione*, a recitative and aria for alto and two oboes with non-liturgical text that leads directly into the *Gloria*. The second movement *Et in Terra Pax* is—like the one in RV 589—a slow movement with a lot of chromatic lines. The *Laudamus Te* is a springy duet for two sopranos. After a solemn *Gratias*, the *Domine Deus* is set as a Largo movement for tenor solo. Unlike RV 589, RV 588 does contain tenor and bass solos. The *Domine Fili* in RV 588 is an Andante movement unlike its lively counterpart in RV 589. Another difference is the setting of the *Qui sedes*. In RV 589, it is a passionate Allegro aria, whereas Vivaldi set it as a Largo movement in RV 588. The *Quoniam* in RV 588 is not a quote of the beginning movement but a lively aria for soprano and two oboes. The *Cum Sancto Spiritu* sounds very familiar with only some minor variations.

*For more on Vivaldi see *BachBeat* Vol.3, No.1 and Vol.4, No.3 at www.bachcantatachoir.org.

Silent Auction Fundraiser

The Bach Cantata Choir welcomes you to this, our 2011-12 season, bringing you the choral masterworks of the great J.S. Bach. In addition to our mission of singing all of his more than 250 cantatas, the choir sings works of many other masters, including in this concert works by Ludovico Viadana and Antonio Vivaldi.

With the exception of our Christmas Oratorio concert, the BCC does not charge admission. Instead, we rely on the generous support of audience members like you to fund our mission. The choir accepts free-will offerings at each of our

concerts and holds a Silent Auction at our first concert every fall.

We encourage everyone to show up early, stay late, and bid generously to ensure that we can continue to bring you this wonderful music. In addition to bidding, if you or your friends and family have the resources, please consider donating items to our auction. As we are a 501(c)(3) organization, donations to the BCC are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law and regulation. Visit www.bachcantatachoir.org or email bachcantatachoir@gmail.com if you would like to help out in this way before November 3.

Elinor Friedberg

1970-2011



From her last performance with us in May 2011,
Elinor's arrangement of *O Magnum Mysterium*

Musician, dancer, artist, friend

Elinor, you will be missed.



BACH CANTATA CHOIR
3570 NE MATHISON PLACE
PORTLAND OR 97212

Our Season Begins
November 6 at 2:00pm

Rose City Park Presbyterian Church
NE 45th Ave & NE Sandy Blvd

Ludovico Viadana: Exsultate Justi

Antonio Vivaldi: Gloria, RV 588

J. S. Bach, Cantata #115