

WIGMORE HALL

Wednesday 20 July 2022 7.30pm

Paula Murrihy mezzo-soprano

Ensemble Marsyas

Peter Whelan director, harpsichord, organ

Sarah Sexton violin

Christine Sticher double bass

Leo Duarte taille

Henry Tong violin

Pablo Fitzgerald lute

Hugo Arteaga bassoon

Oliver Wilson viola

Clara Espinosa Encinas oboe

Tom Foster organ

Sarah McMahon cello

Martin Roux oboe

We are grateful to Dunard Fund for their generosity to the Hall and for supporting this concert.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) Sinfonia from *Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal* BWV146 (c.1726)

Ich habe genug BWV82 (1727)

Interval

Orchestral Suite No. 4 in D BWV1069 (early version) (c.1725)

*I. Ouverture • II. Bourrée I • III. Bourrée II • IV. Gavotte •
V. Menuett I • VI. Menuett II • VII. Réjouissance*

Geist und Seele wird verwirret BWV35 (1726)

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'It pleased God that I should be called hither to be Director of Music and Cantor at the St Thomas School,' **Bach** recalled in 1730. 'Though at first, indeed, it did not seem at all proper to me to change my position of Capellmeister for that of Cantor.' The composer and his large family had moved to Leipzig seven years earlier from Cöthen, where he had been music director to the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. Yet what felt like a step down the career ladder – from court musician to public servant – came with compensations, among them the chance for Bach's children to be educated at Leipzig's highly regarded Thomas School and for him to become immersed in the university city's musical life.

Between spring 1723 and autumn 1727, in addition to teaching senior schoolboys, Bach devoted his time to the composition of church cantatas, one for each Sunday, apart from the penitential weeks before Christmas and Easter, and every feast day of the Lutheran church year. He created four annual cantata cycles, of which around 150 have survived. While Bach composed most of his first two cantata cycles from scratch, he later lightened his workload by refashioning cantata movements or even entire cantatas from his stock of existing compositions.

Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal ('We must through much tribulation [enter into the kingdom of God]'), written for the third Sunday after Easter in 1726 (or possibly 1728), opens with a *Sinfonia* once believed to have been based on part of a now lost violin concerto; recent research suggests that Bach probably conceived the piece as an organ concerto within a few years of his arrival in Leipzig. Whatever the movement's origins, its music complements the cantata's contemplation of earthly sorrows and hope for eternal joy. Bach subsequently adapted the *Sinfonia's* virtuoso organ part for the opening of his Harpsichord Concerto in D minor BWV1052.

Ich habe genug ('It is enough') was first performed in Leipzig on 2 February 1727, the feast of the Purification of Mary. Bach's three-year-old daughter, Christiana Sophia Henrietta, the first child of his marriage to Anna Magdalena Wilcke, had died seven months earlier. Perhaps he held the infant in mind while composing the work; Bach later copied its first recitative and a shortened version of the aria 'Schlummert ein' for soprano and continuo into one of two notebooks he made for Anna Magdalena. The work's text, possibly by Bach's former pupil Christoph Birkmann, is based on the Song of Simeon or *Nunc dimittis*, the canticle recalled by St Luke in his gospel account of the Purification and the presentation of Jesus at the Temple in Jerusalem. Words and music serve to contrast the soul's earthly suffering with the promise of eternity's 'sweet peace and quiet rest', working in tandem in the opening aria to offer

consolation to those whose 'faith has impressed Jesus on my heart' and prepare the ground for the cantata's final song of joy, a triple-time dance that welcomes death's part in Christian salvation.

Bach recycled the opening movement of his cantata *Unser Mund sei voll Lachens*, written for Christmas Day 1725, to stand as the overture of the last of his four surviving Orchestral Suites. The musicologist Joshua Rifkin contended that an early version of the suite, conceived for two instrumental choirs, one comprising strings, the other oboes and bassoon, existed long before the cantata and the well-known version of the Fourth Orchestral Suite with trumpets and drums. Ensemble Marsyas will present the work in a reconstruction of its original form, as it might have been performed at the Cöthen court in the late 1710s. The suite opens with a stately overture in the French style followed by a two *Bourrées*, a pair of lively French dances. The oboes and bassoons take the spotlight here and again in the lilting *Gavotte* before giving way to the strings in the paired minuets. The work closes with in joyful mood with the *Réjouissance*.

Geist und Seele wird verwirret, a solo cantata for the 12th Sunday after Trinity, first performed on 8 September 1726, is also rooted in a lost work. The orchestral sinfonias that open its two halves appear to have begun life as the outer movements of an oboe concerto that Bach probably wrote during his time in Cöthen and a fragment of which survives in a version for harpsichord; the solo oboe part is here replaced by organ, most likely performed by Bach himself, while the concerto's original string accompaniment is reinforced by the addition of two oboes and oboe da caccia or taille.

The first aria, an intense siciliana with an elaborate organ part, may have formed the lost oboe concerto's slow movement or perhaps that of another concerto; it is possible that the second aria, with its lively dialogue for voice, organ and continuo, is likewise based on an earlier composition. Bach gives a fresh sacred context to an existing secular work, reusing its material to express joy at God's might and redeeming grace. The final aria takes the form of a graceful minuet, its flowing dance rhythms embellished by Bach's florid writing for voice and organ. *Geist und Seele wird verwirret* draws the listener into the story of the deaf and mute man healed by Jesus, as told in the Gospel of Mark. It moves to contemplate the glory of creation before calling on Jesus to remove 'this sorrow-laden yoke of pain' in exchange for eternal rest with God.

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Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sinfonia from *Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal*

BWV146 (c.1726)

Ich habe genug BWV82 It is enough

(1727)

Anonymous

Arie

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.

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.

Aria

It is enough.
I have taken the Saviour, the
hope of the devout,
Into my longing
arms;
it is enough!
I have seen him,
my faith has pressed Jesus to
my heart;
I would now, even today,
gladly
leave this world.

Recitative

It is enough.
My hope is this alone,
that Jesus should be mine and I
his.
In faith I cling to him,
and like Simeon, I already see
the joy of that life beyond.
Let us go with this Man!
Ah! If the Lord would only free
me
from the bondage of my body;
ah! If only my departure were
nigh,
with joy I'd say to you, O world:
it is enough.

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.

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!

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

Close in sleep, you weary eyes,
fall soft and blissfully to!
World, I shall dwell no longer here,
since I have no share in you,
that might avail my soul.
Here it is misery that I must tend,
but there, there I shall behold
sweet peace, silent repose.

Recitative

My God, when wilt thou utter
that fair word: Now!
When I shall journey in peace
and rest in the soil of cool earth
and there at your bosom too?
My leave is taken,
world, good night!

Aria

I look forward to my death,
ah, would that it were already
here.
Then shall I escape all the affliction
that confined me here on
earth.

Interval

Orchestral Suite No. 4 in D BWV1069 (early version) (c.1725)

I. Ouverture

II. Bourrée I

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**Geist und Seele wird
verwirret BWV35 (1726)**

Georg Christian Lehms

I. TEIL

Sinfonia

Aria

Geist und Seele wird verwirret,
Wenn sie dich, mein Gott,
betracht'.

Denn die Wunder, so sie kennen
Und das Volk mit Jauchzen
nennen,
Hat sie taub und stumm gemacht.

Recitativo

Ich wundre mich;
Denn alles, was man sieht,
Muss uns Verwundrung geben.
Betracht ich dich,
Du teurer Gottessohn,
So fliehet
Vernunft und auch Verstand davon.
Du machst es eben,
Dass sonst ein Wunderwerk vor
dir was Schlechtes ist.
Du bist
Dem Namen, Tun und Amte
nach erst wunderreich,
Dir ist kein Wunderding auf
dieser Erde gleich.
Den Tauben gibst du das Gehör,
Den Stummen ihre Sprache
wieder,
Ja, was noch mehr,
Du öffnest auf ein Wort die
blinden Augenlider.
Dies, dies sind
Wunderwerke,
Und ihre Stärke
Ist auch der Engel Chor nicht
mächtig auszusprechen.

Aria

Gott hat alles wohl gemacht,
Seine Liebe, seine Treu
Wird uns alle Tage neu,
Wenn uns Angst und Kummer
drücket,
Hat er reichen Trost
geschicket,
Weil er täglich für uns wacht.
Gott hat alles wohl gemacht.

**Spirit and soul become
confused**

PART I

Sinfonia

Aria

Spirit and soul become confused,
when they gaze on Thee, my
God.

For the miracles they know
and which the people tell with
joy
have made them deaf and dumb.

Recitative

I marvel;
for everything one sees
must fill us with amazement.
If I look on Thee,
Thou precious Son of God,
both
reason and sense take flight.
For Thou art the cause,
that even a miracle seems
wretched next to Thee.
Thou art
in name, deed and office
wonderful,
no wonder on earth resembles
Thee.
To the deaf Thou givest hearing,
to the dumb the gift of speech
again,
yea, more than this,
Thou dost open, at a word, the
eyelids of the blind.
These, these are the works of
wonder,
and their power
cannot be expressed even by
the choir of angels.

Aria

God has done all things well.
His love, his faith
are new every morning.
When fear and sorrow oppress
us,
He hath always sent us ample
comfort,
for He watches over us each day.
God has done all things well.

II. TEIL

Sinfonia

Recitativo

Ach, starker Gott, lass mich
Doch dieses stets bedenken,
So kann ich dich
Vergnügt in meine Seele
senken.
Lass mir dein süßes Hephata
Das ganz verstockte Herz
erweichen;
Ach! lege nur den Gnadenfinger
in die Ohren,
Sonst bin ich gleich verloren.
Rühr auch das Zungenband
Mit deiner starken Hand,
Damit ich diese
Wunderzeichen
In heilger Andacht preise
Und mich als Kind und Erb
erweise.

Aria

Ich wünsche nur bei Gott zu leben,
Ach! wäre doch die Zeit schon
da,
Ein fröhliches Halleluja
Mit allen Engeln anzuheben.
Mein liebster Jesu, löse doch
Das jammerreiche
Schmerzensjoch
Und lass mich bald in deinen
Händen
Mein martervolles Leben enden.

PART II

Sinfonia

Recitative

Ah, mighty God, let me
always remember this,
and then I can
happily immerse Thee in my
soul.
Let Thy sweet Ephphatha
soften my so stubborn
heart;
ah, lay but Thy gracious finger
on my ear,
or else I shall quickly perish.
Touch too my tongue
with Thy mighty hand,
that I may praise these signs of
wonder
in sacred worship
and shew myself to be Thy child
and heir.

Aria

I only wish to live with God,
ah! would the time were already
there
to raise a happy alleluia
with all the angels.
My dearest Jesus, free me
from this sorry-laden yoke of
pain
and let me soon in Thine
arms
end my life so full of torment.

*Translations by Richard Stokes from J S Bach: The Complete Cantatas, published by
Long Barn Books (Ebrington, Gloucestershire, 1999)*