

1999

## Johann Sebastian Bach's Wind/Brass Instruments and Scoring Techniques

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### Recommended Citation

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**Johann Sebastian Bach's  
Wind / Brass Instruments  
and Scoring Techniques**

from  
1685 - 1750

By

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## J. S. BACH'S USE OF WIND AND BRASS INSTRUMENTS

### Bach's Ideologies and Scoring

The instruments in Bach's lifetime were not as advanced as our modern day instruments in tone quality and technical abilities. Most brass, woodwind and reed instruments were more difficult to play in tune than the string instruments of the day. While the development of tuning and techniques for tuning were also in the early stages during the period of Bach's life, the organ, string and continuo instruments were superior at this time and did not need the attention given in these areas. There were some wind instruments becoming obsolete early on in Bach's life while others continued to develop. The entire complex of old instruments will not be discussed here but I will emphasize some of the brass and wind instruments he used and how he used them.

Bach knew the limitations of the instruments available to him as well as the performance abilities of the musicians and singers. Given his circumstances, Bach had to be creative and flexible in his writing. The daily practice of uncertainty led Bach to create a petition called "Short, Yet Most Necessary Draft for a Well-appointed Church Music" on August 23, 1730 to the Leipzig Town Council.<sup>1</sup> Here, Bach outlines what he feels are the necessary requirements to create church music. In his discussion he presents a clear picture of his conceptions of what is needed.

"Every musical choir should have at least 3 sopranos, 3 altos, 3 tenors and the same number of basses so that if an individual should perchance become ill, the choir can at least perform a double choir motet."<sup>2</sup>

Bach further adds that four singers per part would certainly be better and gives a total number of 36 singers "who understand music" for the three choirs that had to sing at "St. Thomas, St. Nicholas and the new church, St. Peter's where the remainder of people went who did not understand music very well and could barely sing a chorale."<sup>3</sup>

Bach's petition of August 23, 1730 listed the following instruments:

2 or 3 violin 1 parts	1 violone
2 or 3 violin 2 parts	2 or 3 oboes (as required)
2 viola 1 parts	1 or 2 bassoons
2 viola 2 parts	3 trumpets
2 violoncello	1 drums (kettle)

This is a total of at least 18 persons for instrumental music and if a score should require flutes an additional 2 people would be needed for a total of 20. Here, Bach uses a lower number to show that 12 singers could confront 18-20 instrumentalists.<sup>4</sup> A proportion of 3:2 was comfortably suitable for most church services. This large number of instrumentalist and singers was not out of line because Bach was taking into account the vacancies he encountered each week due to illness as well as insufficiently trained students who often played and sang for him. In addition, this did not account for special occasions such as feast days, Good Friday or Vespers where Bach would need additional people. Only on these special occasions did Bach have a larger group of singers at his disposal, since the polyphonic setting of the Passion was sung in only one of the main

churches.

To prove his case to the town council Bach points out the inadequacy of the professional instrumental forces at his disposal and that they (the council) provide him with first and second trumpeters (Bach lists Gottfried Reiche as first trumpet), first and second violins, oboes and one bassoon player. He says in the petition that the remaining instruments, violins, violas, cellists and flutes are lacking because they have had to be played by students.<sup>5</sup> These accounts show that despite the apparent pressing need for string and woodwind players, those players whose skills on other instruments were proven (such as Reiche) were probably never called upon to stretch themselves beyond what they did best.<sup>6</sup>

#### Bach's Horn

The horn represented a special problem that has created controversy up to the present day. The instrument itself is known by three names. The *Corno: corno da caccia* which got the name from its origin in Italy, the *cor de chasse* or *trompe de chasse*, *cor á pistons* which has origins from France and thirdly, the *Waldhorn*, *Ventilhorn* which came from Germany. All three indicate a 'natural horn', a simple coiled tube operated without keys, valves or slides.

The horn is not designated uniformly in any of Bach's scores.<sup>7</sup> In the autograph title of Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 (BWV 1046) it is called "*corno di cassia*", in "*War Gott nicht mit uns diese Zeit*" (BWV 14) "*corno du chasse*" and the original parts for "*Auf Christi Himmelfahrt allein*" (BWV 128) bear the designation "*corno*".<sup>8</sup> Invariably adopting their Italian style, Bach names either a 'corno' or a *corno da cassia* in cantata No. 14 *War Gott nicht mit uns diese Zeit*. Whether his varying nomenclature indicates two types of horn is a preliminary problem to be resolved.<sup>9</sup>

The Waldhorn was a novelty when Bach's career began. Handel used it in his Watermusic in honor of King George I and again in the Royal Fireworks Music. The instrument was invented in Hamburg which was the musical capital of Germany in the first decade of the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup> The Waldhorn was a valveless coiled instrument about 58 cm in length. Its stately mellow-sounding timbre was less raucous than the trumpet and could be handled more easily. It was not until his arrival in Leipzig that Bach mentioned its use but now there are two occasions mentioned in his scores of the cantata *Was mir behagt* in 1716 and again five years later at Cöthen in the first Brandenburg Concerto in F dated 1721. In both works he named the instrument 'corno da caccia' and in both prescribed it for performance by other players than his own. The earlier one was for the Weissenfels Capella, the later one for the Brandenburg. Consequently, even if his 'corno da caccia' was a Waldhorn, the prescription in those two works does not prove that it was at his disposal at Weimar and Cöthen.<sup>11</sup>

It is noticeably clear that the horn had its own musical development as an orchestral instrument in the Baroque period and did not merely serve to execute typical trumpet parts in the lower range. The relationship between the horn and trumpet is very close and especially noticeable in parts for high corni da caccia and in passages where Bach uses horns with timpani. This affect was common place in his writing and was also used by other composers of the period. A good example of this writing style and how Bach used the horn is in the *Herr Gott dich loben wir* (BWV 16). Here it is used soloistically in passages and plays a solemn role in the music. Another example is that of his *Lobe den Herrn mein Seele* (BWV 143) where

he uses it with the chorus melody line to support and enrich the timbre of the choir.<sup>12</sup>

In respect to playing technique, the relationship between the Corno da caccia and the Waldhorn is unmistakable. On both instruments the same specialized technique was used to master the clarino tessitura (upper register). The wide rim of the mouthpiece allowed players to switch from one instrument to another without ruinous consequences to their embouchures.<sup>13</sup> Because of the close similarities between the horn and the trumpet it is possible and probable that some of Bach's trumpeters such as Reiche performed these difficult technical passages by switching instruments. This could be the reason why Bach never mentioned the horn in his petition to the town council in 1730. He would not have forgotten to mention an instrument he needed unless he had other alternatives in mind. Since we do not know if there was a difference between Bach's corno da caccia and the corno and his scores offer no answer, it would have been possible to play them on the corno da caccia because his corno was crooked in seven keys. The keys to the horn and trumpet were D, F, G, A, B $\flat$ , high D and high F.

Bach used the various crooked (keyed) horns to his advantage by word painting. In the theme 'the majesty of God' which inspires cantata No. 143, an anthem for the New Year, he adds three corni da caccia and drums. In it, the bass aria, "The Lord is Sovereign Everywhere" displays a ceremonial motive. The horns echo and re-echo their familiar 'call':

Example 1:<sup>14</sup>



Bach's 'Corno' was not identified in his mind with similar associations. He uses it purely for its orchestral value, and rarely outside his choruses and chorals.<sup>15</sup> On the infrequent occasions when it has pictorial significance, it decorates a pastoral and not a ceremonious scene. For instance, in the opening chorus of *Der Herr ist mein getreuer Hirt*, cantata (BWV 112) :

The Lord my Shepherd designs to be.

The opening chorus of (BWV 1) *Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern*

How brightly shines yon Morning Star,  
Whose beams shed blessing near and far!

The tenor aria in *Dazu ist erschienen der Sohn Gottes* (BWV 40), composed for the second day of the Christmas festival, whose Gospel (St Luke ii. 15-20) relates to the visit of the shepherds to the manger. Here, the horns present a soft yet exciting pastoral announcement that is augmented by the picturesque view through word painting.

St. Luke II 15-20.<sup>16</sup>

15: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven,  
the shepherds said to one another,

"Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened,  
which the lord has told us about."

16: So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph,  
and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

17: When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning  
what had been told them about this child,

18: and all who heard it were amazed at what the  
shepherds said to them. 19: But Mary treasured up all  
these things and pondered them in her heart.

20: The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising  
God for all the things they had heard and seen,  
which were just as they had been told.

Another example of one of Bach's most exciting sonorities with the  
horn is associated with the text from Jeremiah 16:16.<sup>17</sup>

16: 'And after I will send for many hunters,  
and they shall hunt them from every mountain.'

When these words are sung, the horns sound a sonorous summons to the  
mountain-side.<sup>18</sup> This most perfect example reflects Bach's creativeness as  
he paints a clear picture through the sound of the horns which also help  
to convey the message of the gospel to the congregation. These examples  
show that Bach's mission was not only to compose music for the service and  
use biblical texts through word painting, but was also in part ministering  
to the congregation through his work.

Although the horn had its difficulties, Bach used the instrument to  
the fullest by bringing out its very soul. By presenting the various tim-  
bres and picturesque views, Bach brought the horn to the forefront of  
chamber music and helped to adopt the instrument into the mainstream or-  
chestra (Bach's orchestra instrumentation) which would be used by many  
other composers during and after his lifetime.

#### Bach's Trombone

Unlike the horn, proper to the pageantry of Courts, the trombone was  
an instrument adapted for civic ceremonial music. Bach's employment of it  
was timid and consistent. As an independent obbligato instrument it has no  
place in his scores. Even if his text invites him to display it, he pre-  
fers the trumpet. Bach wrote for it in only fifteen cantatas and nowhere  
else in his music. There is one exception which belongs to the fifteenth  
cantata, which was written in the Leipzig period. Neither the Weimar nor  
Cöthen Capella was equipped with an instrument alien to Court ritual.  
Cantata (BWV 21), *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis* was the single pre-Leipzig  
score which includes a trombone. Even at Leipzig, Bach rarely wrote for it  
during his time there. Of the fourteen cantatas he wrote, ten belong to  
the last decade of his activity as a composer (1734-1744).

In the preceding decade (1723-1733) trombones are found in only  
four.<sup>19</sup> Bach may not have written for the trombone because the instruments  
themselves may not have been serviceable and were hard to repair at that  
time. Kuhnau, who was the church organist in Arnstadt in 1704, describes  
the church's set as battered and useless.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps a more probable reason  
can be offered for Bach's infrequent use of the trombone. In every score  
that he used it, he used it in association with a choral, or a chorus of

the older motet form. It is easy to hear why Bach might have used the trombone in this manner because its softer, lower and mellower sound would blend nicely with the chorale parts above. In addition, he possibly used it as a foil to enhance and/or take away the shrill of the high corno da caccia parts.

Classic examples of such usage include *Christ lag in Todesbanden* (BWV 4), *Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn* (BWV 23), *O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht in dir* (BWV 118).<sup>21</sup> In these examples Bach uses the trombone to reinforce the vocal parts and at times reinforce the melody. It was important for Bach to support the vocal parts whether in the melody line or bass because as stated earlier, not everyone in his choir ensemble was a professional so it helped them to hear their vocal line being played.

There were exceptions to the number of trombones Bach used. Here are three such cantatas in which he used the instrument differently to provide accompaniment to the choir. In cantata (BWV 25) *Es ist nicht Gesundes an meinem Leibe* he uses a quartet of three trombones and a cornett to add a harmonized choral texture to the orchestral scheme. In cantata (BWV 118) *O Jesu Christ, mein Lebens Licht*, mentioned earlier, the trombone was used as both accompaniment and vocal support with three trombones and cornett. However, in cantata (BWV 135) *Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder* Bach writes for the lower end of the instrument using a single bass trombone.<sup>22</sup> He uses only one trombone in the score and uses it to strengthen the continuo in the cantus of the choral on which the chorus is built. Another example is the *Herr Christ, der einge Gottessohn* (BWV 96), in whose opening chorus the altos sing the choral, cantus. Here they are reinforced by an alto trombone and a horn. It is interesting to notice how or when he uses the trombone. The score usually has either a quartet of trombones or uses three trombones and cornett.<sup>23</sup> Considering these examples and exceptions, Bach's trombones merely reinforce the vocal parts in different ways.

There were choices to be made as to which trombone to use as there were four different trombones at his disposal.

#### Baroque Trombones:

1) Discant Trombone in B flat (known as Alto or Discant-Posaun).... $e_b - b_b$ "  
The notes below  $f$  are poor and  $a''$  and  $b_b''$  are difficult to play.

2) Alto Trombone in F (known as Gemeine rechte Posaun)....  $b_b'' - f''$   
The notes below  $f$  are poor,  $e_b''$  and  $f''$  are difficult to play.  
(Alto in E flat is a tone lower)

3) Tenor trombone in B flat (known as Quart-Posaun)....  $e_b - b_b'$   
The lower notes are fairly good,  $a' - b_b'$  are difficult to play.

4) Bass Trombone in F (Octav-Posaun)....  $b - f'$   
The lower notes are good  $e' - f'$  are difficult to play.  
(Bass in E flat is a tone lower)

Most composers did not write for the Octav-Posaun (Bass Trombone) and thought it was too insignificant in tone for concerted music.<sup>24</sup> If a lower part was needed it could be played by a string bass or perhaps the quart-Posaun (Tenor Trombone in B flat).

Judging from the instrumentation which is listed in the "New Grove

Dictionary of Music," Bach's trombone scoring preferences is for a 'choir' of three or four trombones as opposed to one or two.<sup>25</sup>

### Bach's Trumpet

The most popular brass instrument in Bach's day was the trumpet. The trumpet was completely different than the modern trumpets of modern day. Bach's normal trumpet was a 'natural' instrument equipped neither with valves, slides or pistons. Its fundamental note varied according to the length of tubing. The most common keys were C, D $\flat$ , D, E $\flat$ , A $\flat$ , F and F# (probably for a low G pitch). The trumpet in D was most commonly used because of its natural scale.<sup>26</sup> All of the keyed instruments had to be played by all trumpeters if they wanted to be employed as a professional musician.

A good example of someone who played these trumpets was Gottfried Reiche who is mentioned in Bach's petition to the town council of August 23, 1730 titled "Short, Yet Most Necessary Draft for a Well-appointed Church Music". As mentioned earlier, this document appointed Reiche as his first trumpeter in the orchestra. The idea or thought of someone playing 5 or 6 different keyed trumpets shows how flexible a trumpeter had to be. In most instances they surely would have had to be at the professional level as Reiche was if they wanted to be employed as a trumpeter. Some of the music required two, sometimes three different trumpets in a single cantata in order to play all of the written notes. In other words, not every note that Bach and other composers wrote was playable on only one trumpet. The composers knew what the instrument limitations were and composed around the problem. "When Bach modulates to secondary keys in his large works, the trumpets are acoustically restricted and are unable to play."<sup>27</sup> When this occurs, a sense of adventure, risk or musical loss comes into play but is resolved with the return to tonic where the trumpeters reenter to establish the tonal center. To some extent, the high tessitura playing gives the illusion of transcending these limitations temporarily in solo concertos and some obbligato parts.<sup>28</sup> Works that utilized more than one trumpet were closely tied to the acoustical base of the trumpets' fundamental.

The natural trumpet and the notes it normally produced are as follows in the key of C:

Example 2:<sup>29</sup>



The wide range of Bach's trumpet parts seem to suggest that, at least on the upper tessitura, two players were used. One played the main body of the work and the second reserved for only the high harmonic notes. However, given Bach's resources for most services, this compromise of two trumpeters was neither feasible nor necessary. As I pointed out in Bach's petition and instrument requirement list, his resources were too limited to permit the allocation of two players to a part within a given work, and the difficulties that today's modern player encounters do not seem to be apparent to musicians schooled by long tradition in the technique his



scores demanded. Therefore, the trumpeter in Bach's day had to be trained in not only playing the instrument but knowing when to change instruments as to facilitate long passages and know which keyed trumpet to use if the composer did not specify. Earlier I mentioned that trumpets were available in every key which could account for the very high parts that Bach wrote for the instrument. The trumpeter would have played the upper tessitura parts easier on the D trumpet or perhaps the A<sub>2</sub>, making it more accommodating in longer phrases.

Although the trumpet seems to be the loudest instrument for the period, there are two exceptions: the kettledrum which is incapable of even rudimentary melodic motion, and the organ which is unmovable and limited to the church. Because the trumpet was more brilliant sounding than the other brass instruments, Bach used it for effect.

To say that seventeenth and eighteenth century music is boring is untrue as we must understand the social order of the day in order to appreciate what is heard. In Bach's day, music was not thought to be completely personal or subjective but was considered a public means of communication, like a language.<sup>10</sup> Bach knew that certain musical gestures, patterns and nuances would affect the congregation in more or less predictable ways. Because the articulation of effect was considered the very purpose of Baroque music, musicians and composers of the day played on these effects to generate emotion in the music.

Bach clearly uses affect in his cantata (BWV 51) *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!* Here he articulates by a variety of means, both textual and musical. The text is modelled after certain Old Testament psalms (such as Psalm 150) in its joyous exaltation. In example No.3,<sup>11</sup> the first two measures of the trumpet part are doubled in the first violin. The motive here states what will be the most important thematic material of the work.

(BWV 51) *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!* Text from Psalm 150:

Praise ye God, all men, adore Him!  
Heaven and earth, His praise sing!

A brief analysis of this work and others like it are important if we are to understand what Bach did and the reasons behind it. From the downbeat of the first measure he outlines a simple C triad and does so with the entire ensemble. Through the sixteenth notes and octave range there is a sense of freedom in motion, in the very context of "Jauchzet Gott" plus the stability and freedom of motion in the music combine the joy and confidence in which credit is given to the love of God.<sup>12</sup>

With so much affirmation (straightforward tonic and dominant chords) going on in this piece, the gestures and other affirmative musical idioms should be heightened. For example, the F (dotted quarter note) in measure four (and elsewhere) should be held full value and emphasized because it provides a moment of stress or what is otherwise a static phrase and makes resolutions more satisfying.

J.S. Bach, "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen,"  
from BWV 51; measures 1 - 6.

ARIA

Tromba

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Soprano

Continuo

6 6 6 6 6

5 4

7 6 6 6 7 7 6 9

5 4 5 5 5 7 7 7

3

Another important note and one that sounds wrong in the music is the B<sup>b</sup> (quarter note) in measure 25. In this example, the trumpet has the only melodic line which does not resolve to the expected C major triad. This B<sup>b</sup> is an extension of the 'A' section of the aria which is a sudden shift away from the tonic. See example 4."

J.S. Bach, "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen,"  
from BWV 51; measures 25 - 30.

7 6 6 6 3 9 3 6 6 5

6 6 7 7

Another technique Bach used to create tension was to pair voices. In his cantata (BWV 77) *Ach, es bleibt meiner Liebe* (See example 5<sup>14</sup> pages 12-13) he wrote a duet between the alto and trumpet. The example in measures 17-27 seem to be the highlight of the work. It is here that Bach uses two independent voices that compliment each other and is an ideal spot for ornamentation on the repeat (repeat not shown). Having the trumpet complement the vocal parts was something he did regularly with the horn and occasionally the trombone section.

Within much of Bach's orchestral and choral music he associates the trumpet with a solo voice. Many times the bass voice was used as in cantata (BWV 70) *Wachet! betet! betet! wachet!* Here, the twenty-sixth Sunday after Trinity, the theme of the second Advent informs the text, especially in the bass recit. and aria of part II. In the first, the trumpet sounds the appropriate Advent melody, 'Es ist gewisslich an der Zeit'. In the aria

Welcome Resurrection morn!  
Peal out, ring out, Judgement call!

the trumpet sounds a sternly urgent summons above the agitated strings and continuo.<sup>15</sup> In cantata (BWV 128) *Auf Christi Himmelfahrt allein* the bass aria acclaims the risen Christ:

Up, up, ye trumpets, call!  
Tell forth to one and all,  
Jesus on high is throned!

For this exciting moment Bach uses the trumpet in a type of flourish fanfare of praise as if he was inspired by the angels.

With rare exceptions did Bach give the trumpet its Italian name *Tromba*.<sup>16</sup> He does so in the cantata (BWV 77) *Ach, es bleibt meiner Liebe* which he wrote for the tromba da tirarsi or slide trumpet (See example 5<sup>11</sup> pages 12-13). Bach chose this instrument for this work because of the chromaticism of the music. He uses the chromatics to construct images of striving, failing and distress.<sup>17</sup> In measures 48-50, the voice's line seems sensible by itself but it results in a series of clashes with the continuo creating tension and uncertainty at the very moment the text mentions failure. This same text is also set in measures 69-75. In this example Bach creates tension by dropping out the continuo in measure 73 leaving the trumpet on a difficult arpeggio. The use of affect in the trumpet part of the cantata is remarkable. Not only in the sense of failing, but also of striving and even confidence can be recognized in the trumpet part. Measures 35-37 the music is moving upward in a sequence as if it is striving. It stops in measure 38. Measures 52-60 are considered more typical trumpet material which has ascending fourths and fifths, diatonic scales centered closer to the key of C major without chromaticism.

Bach's counterpoint and harmonic progressions tend to be very intricately organized, and ornamentation is much more limited than with most other composers. But *Ach, es bleibt meiner Liebe* (BWV 77) (example 5<sup>14</sup> pages 12-13) is less densely composed than most of his works. The longer note values in this work are rare (for Bach's music) and provide for substantial ornamentation.<sup>18</sup>

## Example 5

J. S. Bach, "Ach, es bleibt in meiner Liebe," from BWV 77.

ARIA

Tromba

Alto

Continuo

Ach, es bleibt in mei ner Lie be lau ter

Un voll kom men heit, ach, es bleibt in mei uer Lie be

lau - ter, lau - ter Un - voll kom men heit!

Musical score for the song "Hilf mir, mein Leben zu genießen" by Franz Schubert. The score is for voice and piano. The voice part is in G major, 4/4 time. The piano accompaniment is in G major, 4/4 time. The lyrics are "Hab' ich oft - mals".

gleich - den Wil - - - - len, was Gott sa - - - - get, zu - - - - er - fül - - - - len, fehlt mir's

Musical score for the song "Möge dich der Friede halten". The score is written for three parts: Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Bass (B). The lyrics are in German. The music is in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The Soprano part begins with a rest, followed by a melodic line. The Alto part has a long note with a slur, followed by a melodic line. The Bass part has a long note with a slur, followed by a melodic line. The lyrics are: "doch - - - - an Mög - lich keit."

Musical score for the song "Der Hirt und das Lamm". The score is written for three parts: Treble (Soprano/Alto), Bass (Tenor/Bass), and Bass (Bass). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Hab' ich oft - - - mals gleich - - - den". The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and a trill (tr).

tr

a

b

Wil - - - len, was Gott sa - - - - get, zu - er - - - - rül - - - - len, fehlt mir's doch - an Mög -

lich - keit, - - - fehlt mir's doch, - - - fehlt mir's doch an Mög - lich - keit.

*Da Capo*

Since the natural trumpet's overtone series limited elaborate grace (ornamented) notes etc., modern trumpeters need to rethink where to use fancy ornaments in today's practice. Improvisation was a necessary skill for the Baroque musicians and Bach used it readily. Whatever the scope of the ornamentation, it is important to remember the affect of the piece. Ornaments were not just decorations, they functioned as integral parts of the interpretation contributing to the articulation of the affect. An ornamented version of a repeated section should intensify and elaborate on the effect of the unornamented version.<sup>39</sup> The Baroque practice of ornamentation on a repeated section was customary. Performers were expected to alter the rhythm of certain written notes much like jazz musicians of today embellish or improvise notes. In addition, composers used figured bass numbers under the continuo that allowed the performer to fill-in the harmonies. This practise adds a personalized touch to the music also.

#### Bach's Ideologies for Scoring

In the Baroque era, the composer allowed ornamented passages, embellished or trilled single notes up to the performer, combining music composition and performance. This is different than any other art form. For example, reading a score is much like reading a novel or viewing a painting at a gallery. The musical elements in a Bach score require the conductor and performer to work from a set of understood performance practices. Both can interpret and alter the music in certain situations to change the performance which changes what the listener hears. It is the listener who is on the receiving end and does not know what is being changed if anything. This musical experience and practice is different than that of the visual arts or publishing world. For example, a person viewing a painting is not expected to take up a brush to the canvas and alter the painting to better personalize the art to their taste. Secondly, a reader is not expected to add words to a novel changing the intended meaning or embellish it from the original authors intent.<sup>40</sup> Music is the only medium that has this luxury and composers such as Bach and Handel understood this and gave ornamental license in their score writing.

Each period of time has it's own social, cultural and religious rules from which composers obey. In the Baroque era, most composers wrote music for the church. In Europe, the church was either Protestant or Catholic. There were other religions that used music and others that didn't, but these are not within the scope of this paper. Bach was a Lutheran and practised writing in the traditional choral, cantata and motet styles that his predecessors did. What made Bach different than the others was his creative approach to writing, reharmonizing chorals, developing the fugue and the Clavierübung. His sacred and secular music create a fine line as both are performed in religious and nonreligious ceremonies to this day. With one exception did Bach change one of his works to be included in a Catholic Mass. He repackaged his Lutheran Mass to the Catholic court of Dresden with the addition of the Nicene Creed and a Sanctus which are part of the Catholic Mass.<sup>41</sup> The Creed of this B Minor Mass alternates ethereal voice and almost shamanic drum rhythms. The use of drums and instruments were not used in some religious services, particularly in the Catholic tradition as it was viewed as not being sacred. Some early Christians banned instruments from worship as far back as biblical times. The human voice was the only instrument from which people could worship God.<sup>42</sup>

## Symbolisim in Scoring

Numerical symbolisim was widely used by Baroque composers and played an important role in Bach's intellectual life and can be found in his fugal writing as well as his chorales. An excellent example can be found in his final composition. From his death bed, J. S. Bach dictated the chorale "Before Thy throne my God I stand." It contains a first line melody comprising fourteen notes. The complete chorale melody that follows contains forty-one notes. Bach assigned numerical values to the letter of the alphabet that can be translated as such. His name spelled B-A-C-H adds up to 14, and J-S-B-A-C-H totals 41 which is the inversion of 14. Bach's message is clear.<sup>41</sup> "Before Thy throne my God I, Bach, stand. This is not just any Bach, but specifically J.S. Bach." There are many other examples from his earliest keyboard compositions to his cannons and cantatas where he used the letters B-A-C-H.

Bach's role as a composer should be viewed objectively. We must remember how flexible he had to be and what he had at his disposal during his lifetime. Whether or not his situation changed with instruments of the day, performers who were untrained or social idealogies, I believe Bach would have regarded many of his practices as solutions born out of necessity. To determine which instrument represented his final intent and what he really rather would have had will never be answered. In the end I think Bach's choices were appropriate for the time and are still applicable today.



## NOTES

1. Timothy A. Collins, "Gottfreid Reiche" *A More Complete Biography* (International Trumpet Guild, Vol. XV, No. 3 Feb. 1991): 9
2. Karl Hochreither, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *Performance Practice of the Vocal/Instrumental Works of Johann Sebastian Bach* (Baldwin-Wallace College: Unpublished, Trans. Melvin P. Unger Vol. VIII/2, 1977): 2
3. Philipp Spitta, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *His Work and Influence on the Music of Germany, 1685-1750* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., Trans. Clara Bell, J.A. Fuller-Maitland Vol. 1, 1951): 60
4. Timothy A. Collins, "Gottfreid Reiche" *A More Complete Biography* (International Trumpet Guild, Vol. XV, No. 3 Feb. 1991): 9
5. Ibid., 10
6. As a trumpeter, Reiche would also have possessed considerable skill at playing the horn. Both the trumpet and horn of this period utilized similar playing techniques and equipment. This included the transposition of each horn and their respective keys. Timothy A. Collins, "Gottfreid Reiche" *A More Complete Biography* (International Trumpet Guild, Vol. XV, No. 3 Feb. 1991): 9
7. Karl Hochreither, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *Performance Practice of the Vocal/Instrumental Works of Johann Sebastian Bach* (Baldwin-Wallace College: Unpublished, Trans. Melvin P. Unger Vol. VIII/2, 1977): 75
8. As with other instruments, the diversity of horn designations does not necessarily signify multiple identities. A testimonial Bach wrote in 1745 calls the instrument a hunting horn. Karl Hochreither, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *Performance Practice of the Vocal/Instrumental Works of Johann Sebastian Bach* (Baldwin-Wallace College: Unpublished, Trans. Melvin P. Unger Vol. VIII/2, 1977): 75
9. Philipp Spitta, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *His Work and Influence on the Music of Germany, 1685-1750* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., Trans. Clara Bell, J.A. Fuller-Maitland Vol. 1, 1951): 42
10. Ibid., 43
11. Ibid., 43
12. Karl Hochreither, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *Performance Practice of the Vocal/Instrumental Works of Johann Sebastian Bach* (Baldwin-Wallace College: Unpublished, Trans. Melvin P. Unger Vol. VIII/2, 1977): 55
13. Ibid., 55
14. Philipp Spitta, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *His Work and Influence on the Music of Germany, 1685-1750* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., Trans. Clara Bell, J.A. Fuller-Maitland Vol. 1, 1951): 46
15. Ibid., 47
16. St. Luke II. 15-20. *Holy Bible, New International Version* (Michigan: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 9th Addition, August 1983): 949
17. Jeremiah 16:16. *Holy Bible, New International Version* (Michigan: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 9th Addition, August 1983): 718
18. Philipp Spitta, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *His Work and Influence on the Music of Germany, 1685-1750* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., Trans. Clara Bell, J.A. Fuller-Maitland Vol. 1, 1951): 41
19. Ibid., 41
20. Ibid., 39
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., 40
24. Robert Walser, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *Musical Imagery and Performance Practice in J. S. Bach's Arias with Trumpet* (International Trumpet Guild, Vol. XIII, No. 1 Sept. 1988): 63-77
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Philipp Spitta, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *His Work and Influence on the Music of Germany, 1685-1750* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., Trans. Clara Bell, J.A. Fuller-Maitland Vol. 1, 1951): 28
29. Ibid., 25
30. Robert Walser, "Johann Sebastian Bach" *Musical Imagery and Performance Practice in J. S. Bach's Arias with Trumpet* (International Trumpet Guild, Vol. XIII, No. 1 Sept. 1988): 67
31. Ibid., 70
32. Ibid., 63
33. Ibid., 71
34. Ibid., 75-77
35. Ibid., 67
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., 67-68
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Gordon K. Greene, "For Whom and Why Does the Composer Prepare a Score?" *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Summer, 1974), pp. 504-506
41. Ibid., 504
42. C. M. Hann, "Creeds, Cultures and the Witchery of Music" *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (June, 2003), pp. 231-232
43. Gordon K. Greene, "For Whom and Why Does the Composer Prepare a Score?" *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Summer, 1974), p. 504

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