

PRESS RELEASE

Stuttgart, 22.3.2023

VISION.BACH for today: the first Leipzig cycle of cantatas from 1723/24

The Gaechinger Cantorey with Hans-Christoph Rademann // 1 year, 23 concerts, 60 cantatas // recorded on the hänssler CLASSIC label // 300th anniversary of J.S. Bach's appointment as Kantor of St Thomas's

“VISION.BACH – Understanding life with Bach” is the title of the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart's major cantata project. From 14 May 2023 to 31 May 2024 the Gaechinger Cantorey, conducted by Hans-Christoph Rademann, performs the first Leipzig cycle of cantatas by Johann Sebastian Bach, in their entirety and in their original order, exactly 300 years after their composition. The sixty cantatas will be heard in 23 concerts in churches and concert halls in the Stuttgart region and at leading festivals. The solo singers include Dorothee Mields, Marie Henriette Reinhold, Alex Potter, Benedikt Kristjánsson and Matthias Winckler. In the concerts public figures will reflect on the cantata texts and their relevance today. Recordings of all the concerts will be released on the hänssler CLASSIC label. Advance sales for subscriptions and individual tickets have begun. VISION.BACH is made possible thanks to the support of Kärcher, the Berthold Leibinger Foundation, the Helmut Nanz Foundation for the promotion of art and art education, Florian Nanz and Helmut C. Nanz, and Blickle.

Today the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart presents its plans for **“VISION.BACH – Understanding life with Bach”**. “It was an absolute stroke of luck for the history of music that Bach was appointed to the post of Kantor of St. Thomas's in 1723”, explains Hans-Christoph Rademann, the conductor of the project and director of the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart. “For us, it is a unique historical opportunity to perform this unbelievably rich first cycle of cantatas in its entirety three hundred years later, just as it was heard by the people of Leipzig, and to bring it to life for today's audiences.” For VISION.BACH the cantatas will be performed in the order of their composition in 23 concerts between 14 May 2023 and 31 May 2024, following the sequence of the church year with its feast days and festivals. In all the concerts, guest speakers from a wide variety of fields will provide food for thought for our present times. Hans-Christoph Rademann, a renowned expert in Bach and Schütz, and his early music ensemble the Gaechinger Cantorey, newly-formed in 2016, are realising their own vision in **“VISION.BACH – Understanding life with Bach”**: to bring to life again the sound of the music from the 18th century, and to transport the meaning of the music to the present.

Exactly three hundred years ago, J.S. Bach set to work with enthusiasm as the newly-appointed Kantor of St. Thomas's. Starting on 30 May 1723, the first Sunday after Trinity, to Trinity Sunday on 4 June 1724, week by week he performed cantatas in St. Nicholas's and St. Thomas's Leipzig, works he had previously rehearsed and which were for the most part newly composed. The post of Kantor of St. Thomas's was one of the most prestigious positions in the musical world in Germany at that time. After positions as a church and court musician in Weimar, Arnstadt, Mühlhausen and Cöthen, Bach remained Kantor of St. Thomas's for 27 years until his death. His task was to provide music for the Leipzig churches every Sunday and feast day, including Christmas, Easter, Ascension and Whitsun, music which was regarded as a fundamental component of the theological message in the Lutheran tradition. Despite his considerable workload, in composing these cantatas Bach did not lapse into routine, quite the opposite. The first Leipzig cycle of cantatas, and this is what makes it so fascinating, was immediately a great success. In this cycle, Bach realised his vision of a powerfully expressive, yet at the same time artistic church music, something for which he continues to be admired throughout the world as one of the greatest ever musicians.

Understanding life with Bach

Reflection forms the second strand of **“VISION.BACH – Understanding life with Bach”**. Each concert takes its title from one of the cantata texts: “Poverty kills”, “Authority is the gift of God”, “But the flesh is weak”, “Rage, storms of trouble” or “What use are my worries?”. In addition, figures from politics, society, business, media, theology, music and literature provide food for thought in interviews or lectures. Andreas Bomba, project director of VISION.BACH, explains: “Audiences have become accustomed to hearing Bach's cantatas as museum pieces, with less emphasis on the texts than the music. This deprives the cantatas of their most important prerequisite. It is music which invites us to reflect on the *condition humaine*, the circumstances of modern life, the role of people and their approach to the natural basis of existence and to the social environment.” Speakers include Muhterem Aras, President of the Landtag of Baden-Württemberg, the Middle East expert Jörg Armbruster, entrepreneur Peter Leibinger, the historian of the nobility Karina Urbach, writer Anna Katharina Hahn, theologian Hans-Joachim Eckstein, experts from the fields of neuropsychology, meteorology and psychoanalysis, a volunteer, a cook, a shepherd and others with experience of different aspects of life. Conductor Hans-Christoph Rademann says: “These are themes which interest all of us. I am hoping for exciting ideas and to win many new friends for Bach's music.”

The performers

Soprano: Catalina Bertucci, Miriam Feuersinger, Dorothee Miels, Anja Scherg, Isabel Schicketanz

Alto: Marie Henriette Reinhold, Anna Lucia Richter

Counter: Tobias Knaus, Alex Potter

Tenor: Patrick Grahl, Julian Habermann, Daniel Johannsen, Benedikt Kristjánsson

Bass: Tobias Berndt, Peter Harvey, Matthias Winckler

Ensemble: Gaechinger Cantorey

Director: Hans-Christoph Rademann

The soloists

The solo parts will be performed by leading singers from the early music scene who have already worked closely with Hans-Christoph Rademann and the Gaechinger Cantorey for several years. They form a regular team of soloists who will be heard many times in the concerts, and in line with historically-informed performance practice they will also sing in the choir. "I am hugely looking forward to experiencing the infinite wealth and beauty of Bach's cantatas both as a soloist and, this time, also in the choir, and to bringing these works as close as possible to audiences", says alto Marie Henriette Reinhold. And tenor Patrick Grahl is convinced "that VISION.BACH is exactly the right way of bringing the magic of Bach's music to life for people: establishing his cantatas in the contemporary consciousness is without doubt a great gift for performers and listeners alike."

Gaechinger Cantorey

The Gaechinger Cantorey is the ensemble of the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart. Since its re-founding by Hans-Christoph Rademann in 2016, it combines a baroque orchestra and a hand-picked choir making it a leading period ensemble nationally and internationally. It has made a name with its numerous performances at home and abroad and in a wide range of recordings on different labels, and flies the flag for the "Stuttgart Bach style" on the international stage.

Conductor Hans-Christoph Rademann

Hans-Christoph Rademann is an internationally sought-after interpreter with a wide repertoire, ranging from the rediscovery of early music to premieres of contemporary works. He specialises in composers such as J. S. Bach and Heinrich Schütz. He founded the Dresdner Kammerchor which he continues to conduct today. After positions with the Singakademie Dresden, the Norddeutscher Rundfunk Chorus and the RIAS Kammerchor Berlin, for the last ten years he has been Akademie Director heading the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart.

Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart

Although Johann Sebastian Bach's journey through life never took him to Stuttgart, this city in south-western Germany has been one of the world's most important centres of Bach appreciation and research for over 40 years. The Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart Foundation, established in 1981, keeps alive the musical legacy of J.S. Bach, his contemporaries, predecessors and successors, through events and educational outreach, training and research. Varied concert formats, innovative music outreach and a digital offer of podcasts and concert streams make the Internationale Bachakademie a significant cultural and social player in Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg and the world.

The 23 concerts at a glance



»Vom Licht der Vernunft« (The light of reason)		
14 May 2023	Stuttgart, Liederhalle	Cantatas 75, 76, BWV 1050
»Den Nächsten nicht vergessen« (Do not forget your neighbour)		
24 June 2023	Musikfest Stuttgart Stuttgart, Liederhalle	Cantatas 21, 24, 185, 167, 147
»Die Welt als große Wüstenei« (The world is a mighty wilderness)		
8 July 2023	Stuttgart, Gaisburger Kirche	Cantatas 186, 136
»Dem Vater die Rechnung übergeben« (Give to the Lord the record of your goods)		
20/21 July 2023	Ludwigsburg, Schlosskirche	Cantatas 105, 46, 76
»Macht dies wohl einen Christen aus?« (Does this make a Christian?)		
1 August 2023	Bachwoche Ansbach Heilsbronn, Münster	Cantatas 179, 199, 105
»Die Zehn Gebote« (The ten commandments)		
9 September 2023	Herrenberg, Stiftskirche	Cantatas 69a, 77
»Die Obrigkeit ist Gottes Gabe« (Authority is the gift of God)		
16 September 2023	Herrenberg, Stiftskirche	Cantatas 25, 119
»Armut tötet« (Poverty kills)		
7 October 2023	Stuttgart, Gedächtniskirche	Cantatas 138, 95, 48
»Himmelsglanz und Höllenflammen« (Heaven's radiance and hell's flames)		
14 October 2023	Tübingen, Stiftskirche	Cantatas 162, 109, 89
»Vergehe, Welt, mit deiner Pracht« (Go, world, with your splendour)		
18 November 2023	Stuttgart, Christuskirche	Cantatas 163, 194
»Der Geist ist willig, doch das Fleisch ist schwach« (The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak)		
25 November 2023	Stuttgart, Gaisburger Kirche	Cantatas 60, 90, 70
»Er stürzt die Mächtigen vom Thron« (The mighty are put down from the throne)		
17 December 2023	Stuttgart, Liederhalle	Cantatas 61, 63, BWV 238, 243a
»Sehet, welch eine Liebe« (See what love)		
29 December 2023	Herrenberg, Stiftskirche	Cantatas 40, 64, BWV 248 IV
»Stürmt, ihr Trübsalwetter« (Rage, storms of trouble)		
6 January 2024	Esslingen, Gemeindehaus am Blarerplatz	Cantatas 190.1, 153, 65
»Die Stimme eines Freundes« (The voice of a friend)		
13 January 2024	Stuttgart, Gedächtniskirche	Cantatas 154, 155
»Vom Sterben in Frieden« (To die in peace)		
20 January 2024	Stuttgart, Gedächtniskirche	Cantatas 73, 81, 83
»Ein anderer sorgt nur für den Bauch« (Another only cares for his stomach)		
17 February 2024	Stuttgart, Christuskirche	Cantatas 144, 181, 18.2
»Meine Seele auf Rosen geht« (My soul walks on roses)		
24 February 2024	Stuttgart, Johanneskirche	Cantatas 182, BWV 159
»Der Himmel lacht!« (The heavens laugh!)		
6 April 2024	Schorndorf, Stadtkirche	Cantatas 31.2, 66.2, BWV 4.2
»Der Liebe Kraft« (The power of love)		
13 April 2024	Tübingen, Stiftskirche	Cantatas 134.2, 67
»Was nützen meine Sorgen?« (What use are my worries?)		
27 April 2024	Esslingen, Gemeindehaus	Cantatas 104, 12, 166
»Zum Himmel wandern« (To travel to heaven)		
12 May 2024	Ludwigsburg, Forum	Cantatas 86, 37, 44, BWV 236, 1068
»Erschallet, ihr Lieder!« (Ring out, you songs!)		
31 May 2024	Stuttgart, Liederhalle	Cantatas 59, 172.2, 173.2, 184.2, BWV 165

Performance venues

The VISION.BACH cantatas project has added appeal because of its different performance venues. Alongside the Stuttgart Liederhalle, these are the major medieval churches of Tübingen, Herrenberg, Schorndorf and Stuttgart, formerly centres of Protestantism in Württemberg. Further venues in Stuttgart are the Johanneskirche am Feuersee, the Gaisburger Kirche, Christuskirche auf der Gänsheide and the Gedächtniskirche. In Ludwigsburg concerts take place in the Forum am Schlosspark and in the Schlosskirche of the baroque Royal Palace, which was consecrated in 1723, the year the cantatas were composed. An excursion to the Bachwoche Ansbach takes us to the Romanesque Abbey at Heilsbronn. Some concerts will take place at the Bachfest Leipzig in St Nicholas's Church (9 June 2023), at the Silbermann-Tage in Freiberg, Saxony (1 September 2023) and in the Bach church in Arnstadt, Thuringia (7 April 2024).

Tickets

The concerts in **“VISION.BACH – Understanding life with Bach”** can be booked individually or as a complete package. Individual tickets cost 35 Euros; tickets for trainees, schoolchildren and students cost 8 Euros. The package VISION.BACH Gold at the symbolic price of 1723 Euros includes entry to all the concerts, with extra benefits such as guaranteed seats in the front rows, a Meet and Greet with the artists and presenters at selected concerts, plus the complete set of CDs and more. The package VISION.BACH Silver, covering all the concerts in the series, costs 600 Euros and offers a price reduction of 30%; subscribers and members of the Bachakademie Friends pay 450 Euros. Advance sales for complete packages and individual concerts up to September 2023 have opened at Easy Ticket Service: www.easyticket.de. For concerts taking place in festivals, guest performances and subscription series, the prices of the respective promoter apply.

The recordings

Recordings of all the concerts in VISION.BACH will be released from autumn 2023 on the hänsler CLASSIC label as albums, downloads and streams. The edition will comprise ten double albums and will be complete by the end of 2024, following the order of the concert performances. Günter Hänsler, managing director of the label, says: “I am looking forward to making music history with Hans-Christoph Rademann, the Gaechinger Cantorey and the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart with VISION.BACH.” Further information: www.haensslerprofil.de

Further information and the press conference as a Video-on-Demand (from 28 March 2023) can be found at:

www.bachakademie.de/visionbach



Press photos are available to download at the following link:

<https://wolke7.bachakademie.de/s/rdGrcQpQHW7tzEZ>

Tickets

Tel. +49 (0)711 / 619 21 61, www.easyticket.de

Gaechinger Cantorey

<https://www.bachakademie.de/en/ensemble/gaechinger-cantorey.html>

Hans-Christoph Rademann

<https://www.bachakademie.de/en/gaechinger-cantorey/hans-christoph-rademann.html>

Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart



www.youtube.com/bachakademie



www.facebook.com/bachakademie



www.instagram.com/bachakademiestuttgart/

Press contact

Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart, Dr. Ute Harbusch, +49 (0)711 / 469 36 13, ute.harbusch@bachakademie.de

PR Agency

Ophelias Culture PR, Ulrike Wilckens, Kaja Engel, München, +49 (0)89 / 67 97 10 50, letter@ophelias-pr.com