

J.S. Bach's Cantatas
Solo Arias for Voice and Violin

FEATURING

CWRU Baroque Ensembles

SOLOISTS

Naomi McMahon, Sophia Duray – sopranos

Jaap ter Linden, director

Parastoo Heidarinejad, graduate assistant

7:30 PM

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Florence Harkness Memorial Chapel

11200 Bellflower Road Cleveland, OH

CWRU Baroque Ensembles
J.S. Bach's Cantatas: Solo Arias for Voice and Violin

And then there is Bach...

Introduction by Jaap ter Linden

Baroque cellist · Director of CWRU Chamber Ensembles

I have had the privilege of performing a great deal of exciting and deeply moving music in my life — and so have the young musicians you will hear tonight. We are truly fortunate to stand beneath the vast and magnificent umbrella of composers whose minds so profoundly understand human emotion — and, more remarkably, how to translate those emotions into sound. We are, without question, a lucky group.

And then there is Bach.

Each of us on stage tonight has, at some point, asked what makes this man and his music so different — so elusive, so difficult to fully grasp. At the same time, his music offers a timeless gift: something we can live with for an entire lifetime without ever tiring of it, and without ever feeling we have completely “figured it out.”

Perhaps that is the essential difference between understanding a sonata by Handel, Vivaldi, or Telemann and engaging with the works of Bach. This feels especially true in his solo sonatas, partitas, and suites — repertoire I know intimately as a cellist who has lived with the cello suites for most of my life.

Tonight, we have the opportunity to experience four arias and several recitatives, giving us the added gift of hearing how Bach treats text. I encourage you to follow along with the translations. You may find them surprisingly modern, direct, and deeply relevant.

Enjoy the performance.

CWRU Music 2025–26 Concert Season

As Case Western Reserve University celebrates its 200th anniversary, the Department of Music proudly presents a vibrant season of concerts, recitals, and special events showcasing the talents of students, faculty, alumni, and guest artists. From classical masterworks to contemporary compositions, these performances highlight the creativity, scholarship, and artistic excellence that have shaped CWRU’s musical legacy for two centuries. The season invites audiences of all ages to experience inspiring live music while celebrating our Bicentennial and supporting the next generation of musicians and scholars.


We are pleased to welcome you to **Florence Harkness Memorial Chapel (est. 1902)**, a neo-Gothic landmark on the Mather Quad designed by Charles F. Schweinfurth. Known for its soaring arches, rich woodwork, and Tiffany stained-glass windows, the chapel offers an intimate and acoustically resonant setting for live performance.

Accessibility

We are committed to providing accessible facilities for all audience members. Please inform our staff if you require assistance or special accommodations.

 Silence phones & devices

 No flash photos or recording

 No food/beverages

 Restrooms in foyer

 **Emergencies:** Follow staff/call **216-368-3333**

PROGRAM

Cantata BWV 198 (1727): *Laß, Fürstin, laß noch einen Strahl* Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685–1750)

Recitative: Dein Sachsen, dein bestürztes Meißen

Aria: Verstummt, verstummt, ihr holden Saiten!

Sophia Duray, *soprano*; Parastoo Heidarinejad, *violin I*; Bruno Lunkes, *violin II*;
Jonathan Milord, *viola*; Jaap ter Linden, *cello*; Danur Kvilhaug, *theorbo*;
Mikhail Grazdanov, *organ*

Cantata BWV 84 (1727): *Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke* Bach

Recitative: Gott ist mir

Aria: Ich esse mit Freuden

Naomi McMahon, *soprano*; Sara Brown, *oboe*; Parastoo Heidarinejad, *violin*;
Jaap ter Linden, *cello*; Danur Kvilhaug, *theorbo*; Mikhail Grazdanov, *organ*

Sonata for harpsichord and viola da gamba in D major, Bach
BWV 1028 (c. 1737-39)
I. [Adagio]
II. [Allegro]

Jonathan Milord, *viola da gamba*; Mikhail Grazdanov, *harpsichord*

Cantata BWV 171 (1729): *Gott, wie dein Name, so ist auch dein Ruhm* Bach

Aria: Jesus soll mein erstes Wort

Naomi McMahon, *soprano*; Liz Loayza, *violin*; Jaap ter Linden, *cello*;
Danur Kvilhaug, *theorbo*; Mikhail Grazdanov, *organ*.

Cantata BWV 120 (c. 1729): *Gott, man lobet dich in der Stille* Bach

Aria: Heil und Segen

Sophia Duray, *soprano*; Bruno Lunkes, *violin solo*; Liz Loayza, *violin I*;
Parastoo Heidarinejad, *violin II*; Jonathan Milord, *viola*; Jaap ter Linden, *cello*;
Danur Kvilhaug, *theorbo*; Mikhail Grazdanov, *harpsichord*

PROGRAM NOTES

BWV 198: The secular cantata, Laß, Fürstin, laß noch einen Strahl, BWV 198 (“Let, Princess, let one more ray [shine]”), also known as the Trauerode (“Mourning Ode”), was composed in 1727 by J.S. Bach in Leipzig to a text by Johann Christoph Gottsched. It was performed that same year for the commemorative ceremony of Christiane Eberhardine of Brandenburg-Bayreuth, who was widely respected in Saxony for her adherence to the Lutheran faith. The work is scored for two oboes d’amore, two flutes traverso, two violas da gamba, two lutes, strings, and continuo.

In this concert we hear the accompanied recitative “Dein Sachsen, dein bestürztes Meißen” (“Your Saxony, your distressed Meissen”), which sets a text describing the lament of Augustus(Christoph’s husband) and the citizens of Saxony; the frequent downward appoggiaturas in the strings mirror the imagery of falling tears. The aria “Verstummt, verstummt, ihr holden Saiten!” (“Be silent, be silent, you gentle strings!”) follows, framing mourning through the rhetorical call for the strings to fall silent.

Portions of the Trauerode were later reused by Bach in the Köthener Trauermusik (1729). Later, Wilhelm Rust, German composer and musicologist (1822-1892), observed structural parallels between the libretto of the lost St. Mark Passion and the Trauerode, suggesting the possibility of parody or material reuse given their shared treatment of death and lamentation.

BWV 84: J.S. Bach’s church cantata Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke, BWV 84, composed in Leipzig in 1727 for Septuagesima Sunday (the traditional pre-Lenten season beginning the ninth Sunday before Easter and ending on Ash Wednesday), stands out in his oeuvre as one of the few works he himself designated a “Cantata” and as an intimate reflection on Christian contentment. The libretto was written by Christian Friedrich Henrici, known as Picander, Bach’s regular collaborator in Leipzig.

The aria “Ich esse mit Freuden mein weniges Brot,” scored for soprano, oboe d’amore, solo violin, and continuo, places the soprano at the center as the voice of the faithful soul, expressing serene trust in God’s providence. This spirit is heard most vividly in the three soloists’ buoyant, graceful interplay.

BWV 171: Aria: “Jesus soll mein erstes Wort”

Johann Sebastian Bach composed Cantata BWV 171 for the New Year’s Day service in Leipzig, a feast that celebrated both the beginning of the year and the naming of Jesus. In this festive context, the cantata reflects on renewal, devotion, and the desire to begin the year under divine protection. The preceding recitative proclaims the universal praise of God’s name, and the aria that follows transforms this public proclamation into a deeply personal vow. In “Jesus soll mein erstes Wort,” the singer resolves that Christ’s name will be both the first word of the new year and the final word at life’s end. The music radiates joyful assurance, as voice and violin weave together in lines that ignite and propel one another forward. Each phrase seems to set the next into motion, embodying the bright resolve of beginning the year with Christ’s name on the lips and a heart oriented toward heaven.

PROGRAM NOTES

BWV 1028: Originally thought to have been composed during his time in Köthen for violinist and gambist Christian Ferdinand Abel, recent research points towards the sonata being penned during Bach's time in Leipzig. While the intention of the sonata for the older Abel made sense given its prior dating it is perhaps possible that the work was meant for his son, Carl Friedrich, who went on to study at the Thomasschule in Leipzig in 1737. Bach's mentorship of the young Abel led to the youth's eventual appointment at the court chapel in Dresden and it is highly possible that the work was amongst the many premiered at the Café Zimmerman between 1729 and 1739. Regardless of dedication, the work was clearly meant for a skilled gambist as it spans a breadth of affecting and technical writing for the instrument across its four movements.

BWV 120: Gott, man lobet dich in der Stille, BWV 120 is a cantata by J.S. Bach composed in Leipzig for the annual Ratswechsel (council change), first performed probably in 1729. Although Leipzig belonged to the Electorate of Saxony rather than being an autonomous republic, the yearly rotation of its councils symbolically affirmed civic order and shared governance. This cantata also shares musical material with wedding cantata, Herr Gott, Beherrscher aller Dinge, BWV 120.

The soprano aria "Heil und Segen" ("Health and blessing") is a graceful, lilting movement in 6/8 that expresses the wellbeing hoped for under new leadership. This aria features a brilliant violin concertino part, closely related to material later found in the G major sonata for violin and harpsichord, BWV 1019a, exemplifying Bach's refined integration of expressive vocal writing with a virtuosic instrumental texture.

SOLOISTS

Soprano **Naomi Grace McMahan** (they/them) calls San Antonio, Texas, home. From 2019-2023, they regularly performed with the chorus of Opera San Antonio (Romeo et Juliet, Pagliacci, Tosca) and with the company's educational outreach program. They served as Trobár Medieval Ensemble's inaugural Apprentice Artist for the '25-'26 season, and in 2024 they participated in the Amherst Early Music Festival's Medieval Program. When not singing all kinds of music or researching the intersections of gender, culture, and historically-informed performance, they enjoy the act of creation through sewing and the fiber arts.

Ms. McMahan holds a Master of Music in Voice Performance from Texas Christian University and a Bachelor of Music from Abilene Christian University. They have a deep love for music, from medieval chansons, to baroque sacred music, to opera and musical theater, and are currently working toward a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Historical Performance Practice at Case Western Reserve University.

Soprano **Sophia Duray** is pursuing a Master of Arts in the Historical Performance Practice program, studying with Julie Andrijeski, Elena Mullins Bailey, and Dean Southern. She has recently appeared as a soloist with the Leipzig Baroque Orchestra, the Boston Early Music Festival, Apollo's Fire, and Alchymy Viols. In addition to singing, Sophia studies and performs Baroque dance and maintains a private voice studio.

BWV 198: Rezitativ (Sopran)

Dein Sachsen, dein bestürztes Meißen
erstarrt bei deiner Königsgruft;
das Auge trämt, die Zunge ruft:
mein Schmerz kann unbeschreiblich heißen!

Hier klagt August und Prinz und Land,
der Adel ächzt, der Bürger trauert,
wie hat dich nicht das Volk bedauert,
sobald es deinen Fall empfand!

BWV 198: Arie (Sopran)

Verstummt, verstummt, ihr holden Saiten!
Kein Ton vermag der Länder Not
bei ihrer teuren Mutter Tod,
o Schmerzenswort! recht anzudeuten.

BWV 84: Rezitativ (Sopran)

Gott ist mir ja nichts schuldig,
und wenn er mir was giebt,
so zeigt er mir,
dass er mich liebt;
Ich kann mir nichts bei ihm verdienen,
denn was ich thu',
ist meine Pflicht.
Ja! wenn mein Thun gleich
noch so gut geschienen,
so hab' ich doch nichts Rechtes
ausgericht't.
Doch ist der Mensch so ungeduldig,
dass er sich oft betrübt,
wenn ihm der liebe Gott
nicht überflüssig giebt.
Hat er uns nicht so lange Zeit
umsonst ernähret und gekleid't,
und will uns einsten seliglich
in seine Herrlichkeit erhöh'n?
Es ist genug für mich,
dass ich nicht hungrig darf zu Bette geh'n.

BWV 198: Recitative (Soprano)

Your Saxony, your distraught Meissen,
Is struck cold at your royal crypt;
The eye sheds tears; the tongue calls out:
"My sorrow can be called indescribable!"
Here [King] August laments, and Prince
and land;
The nobleman groans, the townsman
mourns;
How has the [common] people not
bewailed you,
As soon as it felt your demise!

BWV 198: Aria (Soprano)

Fall silent, fall silent, you pleasing strings;
No [musical] sound can rightly tell
Of the lands' distress at the death—
Oh sorrowful word!—of their precious
mother

BWV 84: Recitative (Soprano)

God is not indebted to me,
and when he gives me anything,
that is how he shows me
that he loves me;
I cannot earn anything from him,
for what I do
is my duty.
Yes! Even when my deeds
seem ever so good,
I have not aligned myself with God's
Law.
Yet man is so impatient
that he often becomes distressed
when our beloved God
gives him nothing superfluous.
For all this time, has he not
freely nourished and clothed us,
and will he not one day blessedly
raise us up into his glory?
It is enough for me
that I do not have to go to bed hungry.

TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS

BWV 84: Arie (Sopran)

Ich esse mit Freuden mein weniges Brot
und gönne dem Nächsten von Herzen das
Seine.

Ein ruhig Gewissen, ein fröhlicher Geist,
ein dankbares Herze, das lobet und preist,
vermehret den Segen, verzuckert die Not.

BWV 171: Arie

Jesus soll mein erstes Wort

in dem neuen Jahre heißen
Fort und fort
lacht sein Nam' in meinem Munde,
und in meiner letzten Stunde
ist Jesus auch mein letztes Wort.

BWV 120: Arie (Sopran)

Heil und Segen
soll und muss zu aller Zeit
sich auf unsre Obrigkeit
in erwünschter Fülle legen,
dass sich Recht und Treue müssen
miteinander freundlich küssen.

BWV 84: Aria (Soprano)

I eat my meagre bread with joy,
and do not begrudge my neighbour his.

A clear conscience, a happy spirit,
a thankful heart that lauds and praises,
increases blessing, sweetens affliction.

BWV 171: Aria

Jesus will be the first word

I say in the New Year.
On and on
His name laughs in my mouth,
and in my final hour
Jesus will also be my last word.

BWV 120: Aria (Soprano)

Health and blessing
Shall and must at all times
Attend our government
In wished-for profusion,
That justice and faith be constrained
as friends to kiss each other.

UPCOMING EVENTS

7:30 PM • Friday, March 27, 2026

Collegium Musicum & Early Music Singers

Florence Harkness Memorial Chapel

6:00pm • Wednesday, April 1, 2026

Chamber Music in the Galleries: Biber Rosary Sonatas

Cleveland Museum of Art

4:00pm • Sunday, April 12, 2026

Mixed HPP Ensembles: English Extravaganza

Florence Harkness Memorial Chapel

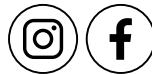
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