

Bach's St. Matthew Passion

Part One

1. **Chorus and Chorale**
2. **Recitative** *Evangelist and Jesus*
3. **Chorale**
4. **a. Recitative** *Evangelist*
b. Chorus
c. Recitative *Evangelist*
d. Chorus
e. Recitative *Evangelist and Jesus*
5. **Recitative** *Alto*
6. **Aria** *Alto*
7. **Recitative** *Evangelist and Judas*
8. **Aria** *Soprano*
9. **a. Recitative** *Evangelist*
b. Chorus
c. Recitative *Evangelist and Jesus*
d. Recitative *Evangelist*
e. Chorus
10. **Chorale** *Autonomous Harmonization*
11. **Recitative** *Evangelist, Jesus and Judas*
12. **Recitative** *Soprano*
13. **Aria** *Soprano*
14. **Recitative** *Evangelist and Jesus*
15. **Chorale**
16. **Recitative** *Evangelist, Peter and Jesus*
17. **Chorale**
18. **Recitative** *Evangelist and Jesus*
19. **Recitative** *Tenor and Chorus*
20. **Aria** *Tenor and Chorus*
21. **Recitative** *Evangelist and Jesus*
22. **Recitative** *Bass*
23. **Aria** *Bass*
24. **Recitative** *Evangelist and Jesus*
25. **Chorale**
26. **Recitative** *Evangelist, Jesus and Judas*
27. **a. Duet** *Soprano, Alto and Chorus*
b. Chorus
28. **Recitative** *Evangelist and Jesus*
29. **Chorale** *NJYC Sola Voce*

Intermission

Part Two

30. **Aria** *Alto and Chorus*
31. **Recitative** *Evangelist*
32. **Chorale**
33. **Recitative** *Evangelist, Witnesses and High Priest*
34. **Recitative** *Tenor*
35. **Aria** *Tenor*
36. **a. Recitative** *Evangelist, High Priest and Jesus*
b. Chorus
c. Recitative *Evangelist*
d. Chorus
37. **Chorale**
38. **a. Recitative** *Evangelist, First and Second Maids*
b. Chorus
c. Recitative *Evangelist and Peter*
39. **Aria** *Alto*
40. **Chorale**
41. **a. Recitative** *Evangelist and Judas*
b. Chorus
c. Recitative *Evangelist, First and Second High Priests*
42. **Aria** *Bass*
43. **Recitative** *Evangelist, Pilate and Jesus*
44. **Chorale**

45. a. Recitative *Evangelist, Pilate, Pilate's Wife and Chorus*

b. Chorus

46. Chorale

47. Recitative *Evangelist and Pilate*

48. Recitative *Soprano*

49. Aria *Soprano*

50. a. Recitative *Evangelist*

b. Chorus

c. Recitative *Evangelist and Pilate*

d. Chorus

e. Recitative *Evangelist*

51. Recitative *Alto*

52. Aria *Alto*

53. a. Recitative *Evangelist*

b. Chorus

c. Recitative *Evangelist*

54. Chorale

55. Recitative *Evangelist*

56. Recitative *Bass*

57. Aria *Bass*

58. a. Recitative *Evangelist*

b. Chorus

c. Recitative *Evangelist*

d. Chorus

e. Recitative *Evangelist*

59. Recitative *Alto*

60. Aria *Alto and Chorus*

61. a. Recitative *Evangelist and Jesus*

b. Chorus

c. Recitative *Evangelist*

d. Chorus

e. Recitative *Evangelist*

62. Chorale *Evangelist, Pilate, Pilate's Wife, Jesus, and Chorus*

63. a. Recitative *Evangelist*

b. Chorus

c. Recitative *Evangelist*

64. Recitative *Bass*

65. Aria *Bass*

66. a. Recitative *Evangelist*

b. Chorus

c. Recitative *Evangelist and Pilate*

67. Recitative *Bass, Tenor, Alto, Soprano and Chorus*

68. Chorus

Featured Soloists

Evangelist: Dann Coakwell

Jesus: Malcolm J. Merriweather

Soprano: Elena Bird

Alto: Patricia Ruggles

Tenor: Stephen Sands

Baritone: Michael Maliakel

Harmonium Soloists (in Order of Appearance)

Judas: Ben Schroeder

Peter: Matthew Siebenhuhner

Witnesses: David Thomson, Sarah Thomson

First High Priest: Holland Jancaitis

First and Second Maids: Michele Yurecko & Laura Quinn

Second High Priest: Matthew Lee

Pilate: John Lamb

Pilate's Wife: Mary Lynne Nielsen

The Sebastians

Orchestra 1

Flute Andrea LeBlanc
David Ross

Viola Theresa Salomon
Maureen Murchie

Oboe Meg Owens
Geoffrey Burgess

Cello Ezra Seltzer
Ana Kim

Violin I Daniel S. Lee, concertmaster
Chloe Fedor
Chiara Stauffer

Bass Nathaniel Chase

Organ Jeffrey Grossman

Violin II Edson Scheid
Isabelle Seula Lee

Orchestra 2

Flute Mili Chang
Lareine Han

Viola Scot Moore
Emily Hale

Oboe Caroline Giassi
Julie Brye

Cello Sarah Stone

Violin I Nicholas DiEugenio, concertmaster
Karen Dekker
Dongmyung Ahn

Gamba Arnie Tanimoto

Bass Jay Elfenbein

Violin II Francis Liu
Peter Kupfer

Harpichord Dongsok Shin

Foreword

by Dr. Anne Matlack

There are certain pieces you love your whole life, and then you realize there is no time like now! I guess that's what a "bucket-list" piece is. No matter how much you have studied or listened to a work, there is nothing like getting right inside of it—but the logistics of mounting this masterwork of the choral canon outside of a university setting are daunting. Between the venue and the forces, I am so grateful that the board and all of Harmonium (and our community of supporters) have made this happen!

I have so many people to thank, I am afraid to name them—but just a few: Chris Hatcher for "hosting" at the Abbey, David Green for heading the "SMP committee" of all things logistical so I could concentrate on performance issues, and all of the accompanists and fine conductors who took rehearsals and sectionals while I was out of commission—you know who you are! Harmonium volunteers house the orchestra, make the receptions, donate lots, practice their music at home, make publicity, move furniture and so much more! We aspire to excellence on a professional level while keeping the "community" in "community choir."

Bach was a deeply devout composer, and yet his work can be felt and understood by all—whether you take a religious or dramatic approach, it celebrates our common humanity. The crowd choruses represent both our good intentions and our worst intentions, and bring to life the drama of the story of the last week of Jesus' life. Then the chorus steps away and in the chorales, reflects upon those intentions in a way that is both personal and universal. The Evangelist unifies the story-telling, Jesus and the smaller roles fill their dramatic function, and then the gorgeous arias expand on the emotions behind it all—not only by the soloists, but by the varied and expressive orchestrations. I hope you will experience this on many levels and many more times after this performance. Whether you sit back and close your eyes, or follow the words diligently, let time be suspended.

Program Notes

by Dr. Mark A. Boyle

"It was an actor and a Jew who restored this great Christian work to the people."

— Felix Mendelssohn

Bach's Great Passion: A Reintroduction

In 1829, a young Jewish musician (already on the path to create his own compositional legacy) reintroduced Berlin to Johann Sebastian Bach's masterpiece, the *Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi secundum Evangelistam Matthæum*, also known as the *Matthäus-Passion*, *The Passion According to St. Matthew*, or simply, *The St. Matthew Passion*. Ten years earlier, that musician - Felix Mendelssohn - began taking composition lessons from the director of the Berlin Singakademie, Carl Friedrich Zelter. Through this relationship, Mendelssohn would learn to love the music of Bach. Zelter himself had conducted quiet performances of a handful of the German master's choral works at the Singakademie: a motet here, some cantata movements there. Even some of the choruses from the *Passion* were read at his rooms at the Singakademie. He was, however, of the opinion that these larger works were not suitable for public performance in their entirety. Still, running against the predominant tastes of the day, that Bach's music was, according to one early 20th-century scholar, as "dry as a lesson in arithmetic," the self-taught Zelter (he was a mason by trade), infused his love of Bach in his favorite student.

In 1820, Mendelssohn joined the Singakademie as a choral singer and accompanist. His father, Abraham, had given a collection of Bach scores to its library and had been an earlier supporter of the Berlin musical institution. Earlier, Felix's grand-aunt, Sarah Levy (who studied with J. S. Bach's son, Wilhelm Friedemann Bach and likely introduced Felix to Zelter), also donated her collection of Bach manuscripts to the music society's holdings. Bach's music, it would seem, was destined to connect to Mendelssohn.

The actor, singer, writer, and long-time friend of Felix Mendelssohn, Eduard Devrient, related the following:

It became [Felix's] ardent longing to possess a copy of the great Passion according to the Gospel of Saint Matthew; this longing was fulfilled by his grandmother on Christmas, 1823... On Christmas Day, when Theresa and I were invited there, Felix, with countenance beaming with reverence and joy, showed me the admirably written copy of the sacred masterpiece, which was now to form his favorite study.

In 1827, Mendelssohn recruited a group of singers, numbering around sixteen, to rehearse the *Passion* in the parlor of his home. Devrient sang with this group of musical pilgrims, developing a dramatic sense of the work that was missing from the readings of

single choruses with Zelter. If Devrient's account is to be believed, he convinced Felix to mount the performance at the Singakademie and to work together to convince Zelter that it was possible. From Devrient's memoir:

One evening in January 1829, after we had gone through the entire first part...and we had gone home profoundly impressed, a restless night brought me counsel as to how a performance might be brought about. I waited impatiently for the late winter dawn to break; Theresa encouraged me, and so I set out to see Felix.

He was still asleep. I was going away when his brother Paul suggested that it was quite time to wake him...When he came in, I told him to make a hearty good breakfast and not to interrupt me too often...I now roundly told him that during the night I had determined to have the Passion publicly given, at the Singakademie, and that in the course of the next two months, before his intended journey to England.

He laughed. "And who is going to conduct?" "You." "The devil I am!"

Despite Felix's initial opposition, Devrient convinced him to move forward with the support of the composer's parents and sister, Fanny. Shortly after, the two men found themselves at Zelter's Singakademie quarters.

"If he grows abusive, I shall go. I cannot squabble with him," said Felix.

Devrient replied, "He is sure to be abusive, but I will take the squabbling in hand myself."

The numerous challenges were (and still are!) real. Double choir, double orchestra, double set of soloists, and overall length were all listed by Zelter as potential obstacles. Modern conductors can relate to his concern that one rehearsal you'd have twenty choristers show up for rehearsal and at the next, ten would be missing. Then there was the consideration of differences between instruments of 1727 and 1828 and how they were played.

Picture this, Mendelssohn pulling at the sleeve of Devrient (eight years his senior) each time he would argue with Zelter, making his way toward the door. It seemed hopeless, but in the end, Devrient — the man who would sing the part of Christ — convinced Zelter that the project was worthwhile and that the two young men had the energy and desire to pull it off.

The 1829 revival saw capacity crowds; some estimates approach one thousand. In the audience were King Friedrich Wilhelm III, the philosopher Friedrich Hegel, and the poet Heinrich Heine. Two more performances quickly sold out, the third of the three being conducted by the initially resistant Zelter. Nearly half of the arias were cut from these performances, but without question, they fanned the flame of the Bach revival that started with Nikolaus Forkel's 1802 biography of the great composer.

Provenance, Purpose, and Performance

According to Bach's obituary (called the *Necrolog* — published four years after his death and written by his son C. P. E. Bach and his student Johann Friedrich Agricola), he composed five oratorio passions. Two survive in performable form — the *St. John* (1724) and the *St. Matthew* (1727). A third, the *St. Mark* (1731), only exists as a libretto. The existent *Passion According to St. Luke* referenced in the *Necrolog* is most definitely not composed by Bach. This leaves one setting yet to be accounted for, a musicological mystery many would like solved.

Bach's *Matthäus-Passion* falls into the oratorio passion genre. Unlike the first *historia* passions in previous centuries, which strictly presented biblical texts, the *St. Matthew Passion* uses three classes of text sources: texts taken directly from the 26th and 27th chapters of Matthew's Gospel, petical poetry by Christian Friedrich Henrici (writing under the pen name Picander), and chorale texts by various authors. The latter two respond to the biblical texts that have just been performed. The work is in two parts, and when it was first offered on April 11, 1727, it was in the context of a Good Friday Vespers service with a sermon in between. In the previous eight weeks, Bach premiered no new cantatas, the most recent having been BWV 84 - *Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke*, performed on February 9th. All his efforts, both compositionally and in rehearsal, appear to have gone into the *Passion*. There would be no time to compose new sacred works or rehearse any other music with which his musicians were unfamiliar. To prepare a work that approached three hours in length with so many performing forces required a certain level of undistracted focus. When I first performed this work in 1999, the conductor, Carl Crossier, said, "I don't know how Bach did this without a spreadsheet!" It was a monumental undertaking in 1727, in 1829, and remains so for any organization today.

With regards to Bach's performing forces - there has been great debate on this topic, finding its genesis in Joshua Rifkin's 1981/82 recording of the *B Minor Mass*. Rifkin put forward a hypothesis that Bach's sacred choral works were likely performed with one on a part (abbreviated today as OVPP — one voice per part). This idea gained traction, supported by contemporary evidence, including what appear to be complete sets of parts with only one copy for each voice, and iconography from the period indicating that choristers generally did not share those parts. Rifkin has not gone unchallenged; musicologists and conductors have lined up in two camps with books and articles written on the subject. One of the best resources on the topic is Andrew Parrott's book, *The Essential Bach Choir*. It is possible that a rather small number of singers premiered the *St. Matthew Passion* on that Friday afternoon in 1727.

Musicologist Daniel Melamed calls Bach's *Passion* a vocal concerto, and it most certainly can be considered such. It is helpful for us to run down the variety of vocal music which lives within the work.

Keystone Choral Movements: These set texts by Picander and involve both choirs. The opening movement, *Kommt, ihr Töchter, helft mir klagen* (Come my daughters, join my lament), the chorus which invites the listener to hear the story of Christ's passion, is the first example of this type. It includes a chorale tune above Bach's original music - *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig* (O Lamb of God, innocent - the German Agnus Dei). Part I closes with a chorus of the same exact type.

Turba Choruses: *Turba* - Latin for crowd - These relate Gospel text, most often offered by groups of people - the disciples (always Choir I) and the crowd at the trial are instances of this type. When Christ tells his disciples in the Upper Room that one of them would betray him, they respond with the brief Turba chorus, *Herr, bin ichs?* Here, we see Bach the numerologist at work. The sentence, *Herr, bin ichs?* (Lord, is it I?) is repeated in full exactly eleven times, leaving out a twelfth iteration symbolizing Judas's betrayal, which had already occurred.

Chorales: These are the hymns of the German Lutheran church. The tunes and texts would have been well known by the congregation, who may have joined in singing them, though recent research questions this practice. Of most importance is Bach's use of *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* (O Head, full of blood and wounds), now called the Passion Chorale. He uses this tune five times in the work, each time in a different key, the lowest key reserved for the movement just after Christ dies on the cross. All told, there are fifteen chorale movements in the Passion.

Soloist Accompanied Recitatives: Normally called *recitativo accompagnato*, these occur before arias and set Picander texts. They serve as a transition between the Gospel material that precedes them and the arias that follow. They are speech-like singing and are always measured, meaning that they are in time, and they are usually accompanied by the obbligato instrument(s) that will be present in the successive aria.

Obbligato Arias: These movements are offered by soloists and set texts by Picander. In almost all cases, we are presented with a solo voice (there is one duet) partnered with a prominent solo instrumental line (occasionally two lines), and most often the continuo group (organ/cello). *Erbarme dich, mein Gott* (Have mercy on me, my God), performed by the alto, accompanied by solo violin, strings and continuo, is an exemplar of this class. This is effectively a dialogue between the solo violin and the alto, pleading on behalf of Peter, who has just denied Christ three times as predicted. There is an anxiousness in the violin line. It's restless. As it wanders from key center to key center, the vocal line follows suit, hoping to find forgiveness in the final cadence.

Concerto-Style Arias and Recitatives: These movements are always offered by a soloist (or in one case, the full quartet of soloists) from Choir I, with punctuated responses from Choir II. *Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen* (I will watch with my

Jesus), offered by the tenor soloist and Choir II, is the first example of this concerto-style movement. These are also texts by Picander. One of the most emotional movements of this type is *Nun ist der Herr zur Ruh gebracht* (Now the Lord is brought to rest), often called the Farewell Recitative, occurring just before the final chorus. Each soloist sings a final line and Choir II responds to each with *Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!* (My Jesus, good night!).

Secco Recitatives: The Evangelist, the narrator of the Passion story, has the yeoman's work with regards to these *secco* (dry) recitatives. Judas, Pilate, his wife, two priests, and two maids appear briefly. They are called dry recits due to the nature of the accompanying instruments, most often the continuo group - the organ and cello. The speech-like vocal line is punctuated by short, unsustained chords. There is one moment when the Evangelist explores a different type of recitative - right after Christ dies and the last verse of the Passion Chorale is heard. Here, the cello represents the shaking of the earth and the torn veil of the temple in anxious, fury-filled thirty-note runs below the description of the scene. He doesn't return to the *secco* style until he describes the raising of the dead in the Holy City, and describes the Roman centurion and his men, filled with fear and the revelation of who this man was. One of the most touching *turba* choruses follows.

Christ's Halo Recitatives: Bach creates a musical nimbus each time Christ sings, greatly contrasting both the *secco* recitatives of the Evangelist and other figures, as well as the accompanied, measured recitatives of the soloists. Before Christ begins each of his recits, the continuo group sustains their foundational bass note, and the upper strings enter, creating this stunning halo effect. In this way, Bach musically highlights the words of his Savior.

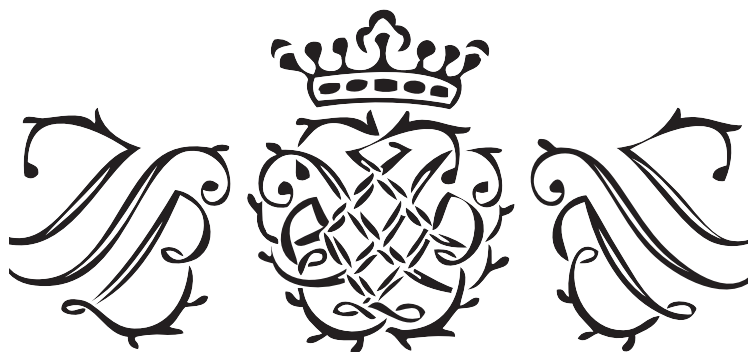
But what did the *St. Matthew Passion* mean to Bach? I have always felt that the answer to this question rests with the 1736 fair copy of the score, produced by Bach himself. The composer spent an inordinate amount of time producing what musicologist and Bach expert Christoph Wolff called a "precious jewel." In a world in which we don't think twice about ballpoint pens and music notation software, the work required to produce a score that uses two different color inks, one for Gospel texts and one for everything else, is somewhat lost on us. Candlelight and natural light would have been Bach's only sources of illumination. Switching ink color was far more time intensive than simply grabbing a different pen. A separate pen and inkwell and taking great care to not smudge or spill ink while switching took great focus — no listening to podcasts or letting Netflix drone in the background. Producing this score was a labor of love and stands alone among the extant Bach autograph scores in its quality and process.

The *St. Matthew Passion* would be offered as a testament to Bach's faith in his fourth year of employment at Leipzig. His ardor for the story of Christ's suffering is apparent in his compositional choices. When the crowd states before Pilate, *Lass ihn kreuzigen* (let him be crucified), Bach writes in a typically imitative contrapuntal manner, yet the melody he

creates, a highly chromatic and angular tangle of pitches, dramatically conveys the crowd's frenzy. It borders on a twelve-tone row; he uses all twelve pitches available to him within nine measures. Tritone leaps abound, spawning a sense of uneasiness in the listener.

If all of this dramatic music isn't enough, after the heartrendingly sorrowful aria *Aus Liebe will mein Heiland sterben* (Out of love my Savior wants to die), an obbligato aria for soprano, two pulsing oboes da caccia, and weeping flute, we are ripped back to the narrative by the Evangelist, who sings "*Sie schrieeen aber noch mehr und sprachen*" (They screamed even more and said), and the angular *turba* chorus heard before returns, a step higher, symbolizing the growing anger of the crowd. It is brilliant writing.

Bach wanted the congregation to feel. He wanted them to experience the passion narrative as he did. In sharing this story in his mode of expression, he hoped to bring people closer to the figure of Jesus. The well-known monogram used by Bach connects to the *St. Matthew Passion*, specifically Mv. 23, *Gerne will ich mich bequemen* (Gladly will I force myself).



Bach's monogram consists of his initials super-imposed on themselves, producing nine crosses. The composer wrote the Latin phrase *Christus Coronabit Crucigeros* (Christ crowns those who carry his cross) below a puzzle canon on the flyleaf of a notebook owned by a Leipzig theology student. In *Gerne will ich mich bequemen*, the bass laments that he would gladly take the burden of the cross, noting that he cannot do anything more than follow his Savior. In the opening of the last violin phrase before the inner section, the notes B, C, A, and B-flat are heard. In the German notation system, B is rendered as H and B-flat is rendered as B, thus we have in this aria about a desire to take on Christ's cross, B-A-C-H (in reverse). Bach is musically stating his faith and his personal desires here in the *Passion*, symbolized by the crowning of his initials graphically carrying the cross.

In 1723, Bach was the third choice to follow Johann Kuhnau as cantor of St. Thomas Church. Let that sink in a bit. One of the most revered composers of the Western musical canon was not the first or even second choice for the post in which he wrote most of his well-known works, including the *Passion*. Telemann used it to gain a pay raise in Hamburg and second-choice Johann Christoph Graupner* (who was a student of Kuhnau) could not gain a release from his post in Darnstadt. Of Bach's selection, Graupner wrote to the Leipzig council that the new cantor would "honestly and properly perform the functions entrusted to him."

St. Matthew

The master of the late Baroque would spend the rest of his career at Leipzig, composing until the end. While he certainly butted heads with his superiors over budget and staffing issues, the music we enjoy today (thanks in no small part to an ancestrally Jewish composer's desire to bring Bach's music into the light of the 19th century) certainly did more than "honestly and properly perform his functions." For us in the 21st century, approaching the work's 300th anniversary, the work still radiates with the genius of its creator. It stands as a monument to Western musical achievement. Bach so perfectly captured the human condition in the work. All emotions present themselves in black dots on the page, brought to life by skilled hands and voices.

This work shows us that the composer wasn't producing material as "dry as a lesson in arithmetic." Through melody, harmony, rhythm, its incredible structure, and Bach's masterful text setting, the *Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi secundum Evangelistam Matthæum* tells the story of Christ's passion in a possibly unrivalled way. Since its reintroduction in 1829, it has become a resplendent mainstay of the Western art music canon, enjoying regular performances throughout the world. As for me, I thank God, the universe, and all good things for Johann Sebastian Bach, his dedication to his art, and this amazing work.

- M.A.B., January 2019

**An interesting note, Graupner's student, Johann Friedrich Fasch, was the father of Carl Friedrich Christian Fasch, the founder of the Berlin Singakademie. The elder Fasch was also asked to apply for the St. Thomas cantorship but withdrew his name early in the process.*



Dann Coakwell — Evangelist

Dann Coakwell has been praised as a “vivid storyteller” (*The New York Times*), with “a gorgeous lyric tenor that could threaten or caress on the turn of a dime” (*Dallas Morning News*). Coakwell can be heard as a soloist on the Grammy-winning *The Sacred Spirit of Russia* (2014), the two Grammy-nominated albums *Considering Matthew Shephard* by composer/director Craig Hella Johnson (2016), which peaked at number three on the *Billboard* Classical chart, and *Conspirare: A Company of Voices* (2009). All three collaborations joined *Conspirare* on Harmonia Mundi records. Coakwell also appeared on the 2016 Naxos release of composer Mohammed Fairouz’s *Zabur* (role: Jibreel), with the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir and Orchestra.

He has performed as a soloist internationally under such acclaimed conductors as Helmuth Rilling, Masaaki Suzuki, William Christie, María Guinand, Nicholas McGegan, Matthew Halls, Julian Wachner, and the late John Scott. Coakwell has performed at Carnegie Hall (Stern/Perelman and Zankel stages) and Lincoln Center (Alice Tully and David Geffen/Avery Fisher halls), as well as Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue and Trinity Church Wall Street, in New York. He has appeared as a soloist with organizations such as Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart in Germany, Bach Collegium Japan (across Europe, Mexico, and Japan), Orquesta Sinfónica de Venezuela, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra in San Francisco, Oregon Bach Festival, and Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, as well as the Charlotte, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Nashville, and Quad City symphony orchestras. He has also shared the solo stage with such celebrated singers as Thomas Quasthoff, Rufus Müller, Nicholas Phan, and Robin Blaze.

Specializing in the Evangelist and tenor roles of J.S. Bach, Coakwell frequently performs the composer’s major oratorios — *St. Matthew Passion*, *St. John Passion*, *Christmas Oratorio*, and *Mass in B-Minor* — as well as many of Bach’s cantatas. An enthusiast of Benjamin Britten, Coakwell has appeared in several productions of Britten’s *Canticles*, *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*, and *St. Nicolas*. Other prominent solo and titular roles performed include Rameau’s *Pigmalion*; Handel’s *Samson*, *Judas Maccabaeus*, *Israel in Egypt*, *Alexander’s Feast*, and *Messiah*; Haydn’s *Creation* and *Missa in Angustiis*; Mozart’s *Requiem* (Levin, Beyer, and Süßmayr completions) and *Mass in c* (original incomplete work and Levin completion); Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*; and Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis*.

Dr. Coakwell also serves as assistant professor of voice at Ithaca College, and has made guest teaching artist residencies at institutions such as Yale University, El Teatro Teresa Carreño in Venezuela, University of Missouri Kansas City, Dartmouth College, Texas State University, and University of Idaho. He holds an Artist Diploma from the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, a Doctor of Musical Arts and Master of Music degree from Texas Tech University, and a Bachelor of Music from the University of Texas at Austin.

Malcolm J. Merriweather — Jesus

Malcolm J. Merriweather is music director of New York City’s The Dessoff Choirs, known for their performances of great choral works from the pre-Baroque era through the 21st century. He is an assistant professor, director of choral studies and voice department coordinator at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, artist in residence at Union Theological Seminary, and the artistic director of “Voices of Haiti,” a 60-member children’s choir in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, operated by the Andrea Bocelli Foundation.

Merriweather’s 2018-2019 season includes his Mostly Mozart debut conducting the West Choir in a world premiere of John Luther Adams’s *In the Name of the Earth* and appearances

with Andrea Bocelli and “Voices of Haiti” at Madison Square Garden. He conducts four world premieres by composers Eve Beglarian, Douglas Geers, Tania León, and Matthew Aucoin as The Dessoff Choirs celebrate the bicentennial of the birth of poet and journalist Walt Whitman. Other season highlights include Ildebrando Pizetti’s *Requiem* and Margaret Bonds’s *The Ballad of the Brown King* with The Dessoff Choirs; Handel’s *Messiah* at Brooklyn College and the Harvard Club of New York; and William Grant Still’s *They Lynched Him on a Tree* with Grace Chorale of Brooklyn. Solo engagements for the 2018-2019 season include Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*; Convery’s *I have a dream* for the New Year’s Eve Concert for Peace at St. John the Divine; and Handel’s *Messiah* with the Worcester Chorus.

During the summer of 2017 Merriweather led “Voices of Haiti” in performances with Andrea Bocelli at Teatro del Silenzio and for Pope Francis at the Vatican. Other highlights from the 2017-2018 season included David Lang’s *The Little Match Girl Passion* and Vaughan Williams’s *Dona nobis pacem* with The Dessoff Choirs; Handel’s *Messiah* at Brooklyn College and the Harvard Club of New York; and Leonard Bernstein’s *Mass (Concert Selections)* and Honneger’s *King David* at Brooklyn College. Soloist engagements included the acclaimed premiere of *Sanctuary Road* by Pulitzer Prize winner Paul Moravec with Kent Tritle and the Oratorio Society of New York at Carnegie Hall.

Merriweather has been featured as a soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, The Dessoff Choirs, the New York Choral Society, and Bach Vespers Choir and Orchestra at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in New York City. The baritone has premiered contemporary solo works by Eve Beglarian, John Liberatore, Ju Ri Seo, Douglas Fisk, and James Adler. He has been a fellowship recipient at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival and at the Tanglewood Music Center.

Merriweather holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Conducting from the studio of Kent Tritle at the Manhattan School of Music, where his doctoral dissertation “Now I walk in Beauty, Gregg Smith: A Biography and Complete Works Catalog” constituted the first complete works list for the composer and conductor. He received Master of Music degrees in Choral Conducting and in Vocal Performance from the studio of Rita Shane at the Eastman School of Music, as well as a Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education from Syracuse University, *summa cum laude*.

His professional affiliations include membership in Pi Kappa Lambda, the American Choral Directors Association, and Chorus America.

Elena Bird — Soprano

With a rich timbre and effortless coloratura, soprano Elena Teresa Bird is a versatile, accomplished artist who brings vocal clarity and energetic character to the stage. Equally comfortable in opera, concert, and musical theatre repertoire, the Alaska native overcame vast distances and icy roads to realize her goals as a singer.

Elena recently returned to Alaska to sing the soprano solos in Handel’s *Messiah* for Anchorage Community Chorus and Orchestra’s 70th-anniversary season. Later that year, she brought opera to Alaska’s Kenai Peninsula for the first time in three decades, performing Lucy in Menotti’s *The Telephone* with the Performing Arts Society of the Kenai Peninsula. Elena then made her debut with New Jersey Festival Orchestra, singing Annina in *La Traviata*, with David Wroe conducting. Recently, Elena also performed the roles of Isabelle, Suor Genovieffa, and Nella, in *The Face on the Barroom Floor*, *Suor Angelica*, and *Gianni Schicchi*, at Fargo-Moorhead Opera as part of their Young Artist Program. Other recent appearances include performances in Los Angeles as part of the OperaWorks Advanced Artist program and recording/starring in the title role of *Germaine*, a new opera by composer Wayne Walters.

Other roles include Sandrina (*La finta giardiniera*), Gretel (*Hansel and Gretel*), Miss Wordsworth (*Albert Herring*), Lucy Lockit (*The Beggar's Opera*), and Königin der Nacht (*Die Zauberflöte*). Ms. Bird covered the roles of Zerlina and Giulietta while serving as an artist-in-residence with New York Lyric Opera Theater, where she also performed as a recitalist.

Her passion for sacred music, oratorio, and art song has led to concert appearances in Alaska, Colorado, Florida, Minnesota, New York, New Jersey, and Salzburg. Elena has performed twice with New Jersey's Masterwork Chorus, singing the soprano solos in Fauré's *Requiem* and Schubert's *Mass in G*. Last summer she was the soprano soloist for Wayne Walters's *Requiem in D minor* with Delaware Valley Choral society.

Recently making her foray into the musical theatre and operetta repertoire, Ms. Bird has been seen as Miss Dorothy (*Thoroughly Modern Millie*), Gianetta (*The Gondoliers*), and Fairy Godmother (*The True Story of Cinderella*) with Light Opera of New Jersey, as well as Johanna in *Sweeney Todd*. An advocate of community outreach and bringing new audiences to opera and classical voice, she performed as Rusalka in Florida State University's outreach production, *Rusalka, the Littlest Mermaid*, and performed for over 5,000 students as a Gate City Bank Young Artist with Fargo-Moorhead Opera.

Ms. Bird received a Master of Music degree in Voice Performance from Florida State University and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Colorado (Boulder) and is a student of Trish McCaffrey. She maintains a private studio in Morristown, NJ, where she resides with her husband, daughter, and dog.

Patricia Ruggles — Alto

Patricia Ruggles, mezzo-soprano, enjoys performing a wide range of repertoire in recital, oratorio and opera. Her opera roles include Dido in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Giulietta in Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and Hortense in Wayne Walters's recently composed opera, *Germaine*. Her love of song is reflected in the numerous vocal recitals she has performed in her native Morris County. She is active as a creative collaborator with various artists including Gwen Toth, harpsichordist, in *Pleasures of Purcell* for New York City's St. Bartholomew Concert Series; John Schucker, pianist, in *A Portrait of Virginia Woolf* at the Hartford Cultural Center; Michael Caldwell, dancer, for a Toronto performance of Fauré's *Chanson d'Ève*; and Seth Hiler, painter, in *EarthSongs* and *EarthScapes* as part of the Grace Community Music series in Madison. Pianist and composer Paul Zeigler has written several song cycles for Patricia; their recording of *Astonishing Light: Six Songs on Poems by Hafiz* won second place in the National Association of Teachers of Singing composition competition. Of a New York City performance of Mr. Zeigler's songs, a *Classical NJ* music critic wrote, "her luscious mezzo, with its warm timbre coupled by a vibrant vibrato, allowed her singing alone to carry the emotion..."

Ms. Ruggles has been the alto soloist in many performances with various choral societies in works by Handel, Vivaldi, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Britten, Copland, and Morris County's Wayne Walters. J.S. Bach is Patricia's favorite composer, and she has performed the solos in his *St. John Passion*, *Magnificat*, and *Mass in B Minor*. Of the latter performance, a music critic from the *Star Ledger* wrote, "Ruggles had a clear, penetrating mezzo-soprano and her flexibility and phrasing made for top-rate Bach." Ms. Ruggles, Dr. Matlack and oboist Rich Dallessio have performed two of Bach's solo cantatas, *Ich habe Genug* and *Vergnügte Rub*, at Grace Church in Madison.

Patricia holds a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Texas in Austin where she was a scholarship student of Elizabeth Mannion and David Garvey. She is

deeply honored and grateful to Dr. Anne Matlack and Harmonium Choral Society for giving her the opportunity to be a part of today's performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*.

Stephen Sands — Tenor

A Grammy-nominated "crystalline tenor" (*Backstage*) who was praised by *The New York Times* as "a tenor with a focused, powerful tone" who sings with "subtlety" and "poignancy," Stephen Sands is highly sought after as a soloist, conductor, music educator, and ensemble member by some of the most prestigious institutions and conductors in the United States. Mr. Sands holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Westminster Choir College.

Stephen is the conductor of Downtown Voices, part of the Trinity Wall Street music program which is in its fourth season. Downtown Voices is focused on bringing the best volunteer and professional singers in the NYC area together into one choir for high-level performances. Of his conducting in Britten's *St. Nicolas*, *The New York Times* said, "In the sequences in which the adult choir sang at the front of the church, with the children's choir in the organ loft, the conductor Stephen Sands beautifully balanced the sound and maintained order. The singers and instrumentalists had incisive, agile strength." The 2015-2106 season featured performances of Britten's *St. Nicolas*, MacMillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross*, and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and *Symphony Number 9*. The 2016-2017 season featured a major commissioned work, *Spire and Shadow*, by Zachary Wadsworth, which examines the rich history of downtown New York City and celebrates the 250th anniversary of St. Paul's Chapel. Stephen also conducted Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with the Trinity Baroque Orchestra and prepared the choir for Philip Glass's *Symphony Number 5*. The 2017-2018 season featured Rachmaninoff's *All-Night Vigil*, a grand Candlelight Christmas service and a concert of the beautiful Martin *Mass* and Howells *Requiem*. The 2018-2019 season features a concert of Estonian choral music and Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

Stephen is a founding member and executive director of the internationally award-winning Antioch Chamber Ensemble, widely regarded as one of the finest professional vocal ensembles in the country. He has had the pleasure of coordinating international performing tours, producing commercial recordings, and staging many self-funded performances. Stephen has recently coordinated and participated in residencies and masterclasses with Antioch at Harvard University, Washington and Lee University, and Vassar College. Antioch is currently producing a CD of works by legendary choral composer Robert Kyr.

As an artistic director, Stephen has successfully founded and raised funds from both individual and institutional sources for Music in the Somerset Hills, an organization dedicated to music education and performance in northern New Jersey. In 2016, Stephen led a concert of Music of the Movies, featuring actor Peter Dinklage and a professional orchestra of Broadway players, led by Jonathan Dinklage. In 2016-2017, Stephen led the Somerset Hills Community Chorus in a concert of Mozart's *Requiem* and conducted a concert of Handel's *Water Music* on Ravine Lake in Far Hills, NJ. The 2017-2018 season featured The Glenn Miller Orchestra and Canadian Brass. The 2018-2019 season features a concert of works by Leonard Bernstein, The King's Singers in concert, and an outdoor concert celebrating the 75th anniversary of Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, which was composed in the Somerset Hills.

In addition to a successful career as a musician and conductor, Stephen is a respected music educator. He has taught choral music to thousands of students in grades 3-12 in the Somerset Hills School District for 21 years.

Stephen has been heard as the Evangelist and tenor soloist in numerous performances of Bach's sacred oratorios, recently with the Trinity Choir and Baroque Orchestra in the *St. John*

Passion of J.S. Bach. As an ensemble member, Stephen sings with the Carmel Bach Festival Chorale, Vox Vocal Ensemble, Aoede Consort, TENET, Clarion Music Society, and Pomerium, and is a full-time member of the Choir of Trinity Wall Street under the direction of Julian Wachner.

Michael Maliakel — Baritone

Michael Maliakel recently made his network TV debut on *FBI*, a new drama on CBS from acclaimed *Law & Order* producer Dick Wolf. The Indian-American actor recently made his Off-Broadway debut in *Anything Can Happen: The Songs of Maury Yeston*, alongside Broadway veterans Robert Cuccioli and Jill Paice. The review was produced by the multiple Tony Award-winning composer himself at the Triad Theatre. Michael also recently played the groom, Hemant, in the world premiere of Mira Nair's musical stage adaptation of *Monsoon Wedding* in a box-office-record-breaking production at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

A native of New Jersey, Michael received his earliest vocal training in the American Boychoir and did his undergraduate studies at Georgetown University and the Peabody Institute of Music of Johns Hopkins University.

Michael is the 2016 Gold Medalist in the American Traditions Competition. He also won Third Prize at the International Lotte Lenya Competition and First Prize in the 2014 NATS National Musical Theater Competition.

Michael also enjoys teaching voice privately and performing regularly with some of New York City's top vocal ensembles, including Trident Ensemble, Musica Sacra, Voices of Ascension, the Choir of Trinity Wall Street, and Musica Viva of NY. He serves as the principal cantor for the parish of St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Catherine of Siena in Manhattan, where he sings in the professional Schola Cantorum.

Michael is a proud member of Actor's Equity Association and is represented by Harden Curtis Kirsten Riley Agency.

The Sebastians — Orchestra

The Sebastians (www.sebastians.org) are a dynamic and vital musical ensemble specializing in music of the baroque and classical eras. Lauded as "everywhere sharp-edged and engaging" (*The New York Times*), the Sebastians have also been praised for their "well-thought-out articulation and phrasing" (*Early Music Review*) and "elegant string playing... immaculate in tuning and balance" (*Early Music Today*). *I Care If You Listen* praised the ensemble's "beautifully-nuanced playing and thoughtful expressivity" in their debut album, calling the recording a "technical and timbral tour-de-force."

Winners of the Audience Prize at the 2012 Early Music America Baroque Performance Competition, the Sebastians were also finalists in the 2011 York International Early Music Competition and the 2011 Early Music America/Naxos Recording Competition. They have participated in the Carnegie Hall Professional Training Workshop with L'Arpeggiata, and have performed at Music Matters (LaGrua Center in Stonington, CT), Friends of Music at Pequot Library (Southport, CT), St. John's Episcopal Church (Tulsa, OK), Juilliard in Aiken (SC), in the Twelfth Night Festival and Concerts@One at Trinity Wall Street (New York, NY), Early Music in Columbus (Ohio), the Renaissance and Baroque Society of Pittsburgh (PA), and Houston Early Music (TX). The Sebastians frequently collaborate with TENET Vocal Artists, including a critically acclaimed performance of Bach's *St. John Passion*.

The Sebastians' début CD, *Night Scenes from the Ospedale* (Jan. 2015), pairs Vivaldi concerti from *L'Estro Armonico* with newly composed interludes by Robert Honstein. The group's second CD, *the Sebastians a 2: Virtuoso Music of the Holy Roman Empire* (Sep. 2015), explores the rich baroque repertoire of music for violin and harpsichord written by composers from modern-day Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic. In Fall 2018, the Sebastians released a new CD of trio sonatas and vocal works by Corelli, Colista, Handel, and Vivaldi, with soprano Awet Andemicael, and other recordings are currently in production for future seasons.

The Sebastians' 2018-19 season features Venetian and Roman trio sonatas and concerti grossi; Bach's six sonatas for violin and obbligato harpsichord and sonatas for violin and continuo; and, with TENET Vocal Artists, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and Handel's *Messiah*, in intimate uncondacted performances. The Sebastians are currently in residence at the Yale Collection of Musical Instruments.

New Jersey Youth Chorus (NJYC)

The New Jersey Youth Chorus provides a unique musical education that encourages a love and appreciation of choral music while nurturing personal growth and creative development.

The idea in starting the Somerset Hills Children's Chorus (whose name was changed, in 2002, to the New Jersey Youth Chorus), was to give the children of the community a unique opportunity; one that would involve quality repertoire, sound teaching, a warm and inviting atmosphere, and a chance to perform. Their mission, philosophy, and goals continue to revolve around that which is most important - the choristers and the music. It is far more than singing. They teach values, they nurture, they inspire.

"We are not teaching music to children," said Trish Joyce, founder and artistic director. "We teach children through the power of music. We have high musical expectations, and we strive for high standards of musical excellence. We also believe that we should teach the whole person. To quote Helen Kemp - 'body, mind, spirit, voice.' We believe that through the choral art - through the NJYC choir family - the musical journey is about fellowship, compassion, commitment, taking risks, growing, nurturing, beauty, joy, and passion. We are here to inspire children to discover, learn and perform beyond their expectations. As Eph Ely wrote, our goal is to 'discover the extra in the ordinary.'"

Tara Postigo — Sola Voce Program Director

Tara Postigo received a Bachelor of Music from The College of New Jersey and a Master of Arts in Music and Music Education from Teacher's College, Columbia University. At Teacher's College, Tara had the honor of working with Dino Anagnost, the conductor of NYC's Little Orchestra Society and Metropolitan Singers. While at TC, Tara performed with the Metropolitan Singers in many NYC locations including Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. For the last ten years Tara has taught choral, general and instrumental music in the Washington Township School District in Long Valley, NJ. Tara was also the conductor of the 2008 North Jersey Junior High School Region Treble Choir. She is a proud member of MENC (National Association for Music Education) and has served on the local NJSMA (North Jersey School Music Association) executive board as treasurer.

Harmonium

Choral Society

Choir 1

Soprano

Leslie Adler
 Barbara Armenti
 Linda Bowden
 Laurie Clancy
 Rachel Clark ^{B, C}
 Susan Goodman
 Jennifer Holak
 Pam Huelster ^B
 Jocelyn Keefe
 Mickey McGrath ^{B, C}
 Laura A. Quinn
 Diane Richton ^S
 Nancy Watson-Baker
 Michele Yurecko

Alto

Jill Alexander
 Alyssa Casazza ^C
 Judith Consentino
 Claudia Dietrich
 Susan Gepford
 Catie Gilhuley
 Susan Hodgkins
 Sarah Michal
 Katrina Mulvihill
 Susan Pilshaw
 Diane Pivarnik
 Beth Shirley
 Kristen Siebenhuhner
 Nadine Sutcliffe
 Kim Williams

B = Board Member

Tenor

Steve Arnold
 Arthur Brooks
 Max Calbick ^S
 Robert Emmerich ^B
 Sam Gersho
 Joe Keefe
 Dean Nielsen
 Sean Nolan
 Jake Sachs ^C
 Ken Short ^{B, C}
 Matthew Shurts

Bass

John Everson
 Michael Holak
 Daniel Malloy
 Andy Moody ^C
 Rob Morse
 George Moser
 Michael Pacheco
 Matthew Siebenhuhner
 Thomas Siebenhuhner
 Michael Sutcliffe
 José-Luis Traverso
 Rob Walters

C = Chamber Singer

Choir 2

Soprano

Nancy M. Bangiola ^C
 Lisa C. Berger
 Eleni Catanzaro
 Linda K. Clark ^C
 Marjorie Cornell
 Kathleen V. Earle ^{C, S}
 Katie Hendrix ^C
 Sarah Kuhns
 Kimberly Love
 Helen Love
 Krystiana Machtinger
 Maria Nicoloso ^V
 Mary Lynne Nielsen
 Sarah Thomson

Alto

Emilie Bishop ^C
 Beth Branigan ^S
 Crary Brooks
 Jamie Bunce ^C
 Dorothee Burchartz
 Anne Eagle
 Jerilyn Herbert
 Jackie Lauria
 Beth Lohner
 Nancy Magee
 Jenna Miller ^C
 Paula Roper
 Beth Kershaw Shirley ^C
 Truc-Lan Vu
 Beth Wilson ^S

S = Section Leader

Tenor

Robert Bowden ^B
 Jim Branigan
 Michael Fitzgerald
 David Green
 John Herbert
 Nicholas Herrick ^{B, C}
 Holland Jancaitis ^C
 Jeff Kunick
 Peter J. Livesey ^C
 Matthew Onigman ^C
 John Pivarnik
 Tom Richardson
 David Thomson

Bass

Travis Alexander
 Craig Clark
 Christopher Hatcher
 J. Scott Jones
 John Lamb ^C
 Matthew C. Lee ^C
 Gabriel Lukijaniuk ^C
 Ryan McDonnell
 J. Eric Roper
 Ted Roper ^C
 Dan Schmalz
 Benjamin Schroeder ^{C, S}
 Jabez Van Cleef

V = Vocalista Scholar

NJYC Sola Voce

Naina Bhardwaj	Taylor Ford	Madeline Knagenhjelm	Ainsli Shah
Siyona Bordia	Alexandra Grushkin	Chloe Lee	Abigail Simon
Jordan Cheung	Charlotte Grushkin	Gabrielle Lopez	Mackenzie Thompson
Caroline Crisafulli-Vargas	Elina Kapur	Sarah Nerger	Annabelle Wu
Shannon Dawson	Saketha Kedarsetty	Sejal Patel	Brenda Wu
Addysen Downey	Siyara Kilcoyne	Clara Schreiber	Nicole Xie
Lilly Fanelle	Stella Kim	Simran Shah	Katherine Ziwot