



Adam Pearl, Karen Flint, Davitt Moroney, JungHae Kim and Arthur Hass - May 2007. Photo by Leslie W. Kipp

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH  
COMPLETE HARPSICHORD CONCERTOS  
ON ANTIQUE INSTRUMENTS

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DAVITT MORONEY • KAREN FLINT  
ARTHUR HAAS • JUNGHAE KIM • ADAM PEARL



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH  
COMPLETE HARPSICHORD CONCERTOS  
ON ANTIQUE INSTRUMENTS

Recorded May 2007 in conjunction with *Bach in the Barn*,  
the inaugural concerts in The Barn at Flintwoods.

Davitt Moroney • Karen Flint  
Arthur Haas • JungHae Kim • Adam Pearl  
*harpsichords*

Nina Stern and Daphna Mor, *recorders*

Carla Moore, *violin, leader*

Martin Davids, *violin* • Amy Leonard, *viola*  
Douglas McNames, *cello* • Anne Peterson, *bass*

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Executive Producer: Karen Flint

Producer : George Blood

Production Manager: Robert Munsell

Editing: George Blood and Karen Flint

Engineer: George Blood

Production Assistant: Tadashi Matsuura

Harpsichords tuned by Barbara Wolf,  $a'=400$ , equal temperament

Instrument preparation: John Phillips and Barbara Wolf

Design: Robert Munsell

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Disc 1

67:23

**Concerto in A minor for four unaccompanied harpsichords, BWV 1065** 9:33

1. [Allegro] 4:09
2. Largo 1:45
3. Allegro 3:39

*Dumont* - KAREN FLINT; *Ruckers* - ARTHUR HAAS;  
*Spanish* - DAVITT MORONEY; *Pisauriensis* - JUNGHAE KIM

**Concerto in A major, BWV 1055** 14:57

4. Allegro 4:39
5. Larghetto 5:50
6. Allegro ma non tanto 4:28

*Dumont* - DAVITT MORONEY

**Concerto in C major for two harpsichords, BWV 1061** 19:53

7. [Allegro] 7:59
8. Adagio ovvero Largo 4:34
9. Fuga 6:40

*Ruckers* - KAREN FLINT; *Spanish* - DAVITT MORONEY

**Concerto in D minor for three harpsichords, BWV 1063** 14:01

10. [Allegro] 5:08
11. Alla Siciliana 3:54
12. Allegro 4:59

*Dumont* - ARTHUR HAAS; *Ruckers* - DAVITT MORONEY;  
*Spanish* - ADAM PEARL

**Concerto in A minor for four harpsichords with strings, BWV 1065** 9:35

13. [Allegro] 4:05
14. Largo 1:49
15. Allegro 3:41

*Dumont* - KAREN FLINT; *Ruckers* - ARTHUR HAAS;  
*Spanish* - DAVITT MORONEY; *Pisauriensis* - JUNGHAE KIM; Continuo - Adam Pearl

**Disc 2** **73:52**

<b>Concerto in D minor, BWV 1052</b>	<b>22:29</b>
1. Allegro	7:57
2. Adagio	6:13
3. Allegro	8:19

*Dumont - Adam Pearl*

<b>Concerto in D major, BWV 1054</b>	<b>16:10</b>
4. [Allegro]	8:17
5. Adagio e piano sempre	5:03
6. Allegro	2:50

*Dumont - Arthur Haas*

<b>Concerto in G minor, BWV 1058</b>	<b>14:23</b>
7. [Allegro]	4:04
8. Andante	6:12
9. Allegro assai	4:07

*Ruckers - Karen Flint*

<b>Concerto in E major, BWV 1053</b>	<b>20:47</b>
10. [Allegro]	9:03
11. Siciliano	4:35
12. Allegro	7:09

*Ruckers - Davitt Moroney*

**Disc 3** **70:58**

<b>Concerto in C minor for two harpsichords, BWV 1060</b>	<b>13:17</b>
1. Allegro	4:52
2. Largo ovvero Adagio	4:46
3. Allegro	3:39

*Dumont - Adam Pearl; Ruckers - Arthur Haas*

<b>Concerto in F minor, BWV 1056</b>	<b>9:13</b>
4. Allegro	3:12
5. Adagio	2:22
6. Presto	3:39

*Dumont - Arthur Haas*

<b>Concerto in F major for harpsichord and two recorders, BWV 1057</b>	<b>16:42</b>
7. [Allegro]	7:35
8. Andante	3:43
9. Allegro assai	5:24

*Dumont - JungHae Kim; Recorders - Nina Stern and Dapha Mor*

<b>Concerto in C minor for two harpsichords, BWV 1062</b>	<b>14:09</b>
10. [Allegro]	3:43
11. Andante e piano	5:38
12. Allegro assai	4:48

*Dumont - JungHae Kim; Ruckers - Adam Pearl*

<b>Concerto in C major for three harpsichords, BWV 1064</b>	<b>17:34</b>
13. [Allegro]	6:48
14. Adagio	5:24
15. Allegro	5:22

*Dumont - Davitt Moroney; Ruckers - Karen Flint;  
Spanish - JungHae Kim*

## Bach's Harpsichord Concertos Davitt Moroney

Johann Sebastian Bach's wonderful set of concertos for one, two, three and four harpsichords form one of the most important sets of works in the early development of the keyboard concerto. It is an easy first reaction to imagine Bach himself performing the solo parts in these pieces, as he no doubt had in the brilliant fifth Brandenburg Concerto, written while he was employed at the court of Anhalt-Cöthen and presented to the Margrave of Brandenburg in March 1721. That work contains a most elaborate virtuosic part for the solo harpsichord.

Perhaps Bach did on occasion play the concertos recorded here. But he prepared them during his years as director of Leipzig University's student musical group, the Collegium Musicum. He directed the Collegium in 1729-36 and again in 1739-41, dates that make special sense when we remember that his eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann Bach (WFB; 1710-84) started law studies at the university on 5 March 1729, and that his second son, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (CPEB; 1714-88) started his law studies there on 1 October 1731. It is therefore most likely that his two eldest sons played the solo parts in many of these works since both WFB and CPEB were virtuoso keyboard players.

Two other sons, who were born too late to participate in the Collegium concerts, would later also contribute considerably to the repertoire of concertos for keyboard and orchestra: Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach (JCFB; 1732-95) and Johann Christian Bach (JCB; 1735-82). The Bach family has an exceptionally important place in the history of the keyboard concerto. JSB transcribed or composed over thirty concertos for the

keyboard and his four sons contributed more than a hundred works to the genre: WFB (seven), CPEB (over 50), JCFB (16), JCB (nearly 30). Thus Bach and his four composer sons alone were responsible for over 130 keyboard concertos.

Johann Sebastian seems to have wanted to make sure that his sons all had a better education than he had had, and in this he succeeded. Coming from a poor family and having been orphaned when he was nine, JSB had not been financially in a position to study at a university when he reached the age of eighteen. He and Anna Magdalena, his second wife, moved to Leipzig in 1723, when WFB was thirteen and CPEB was nine. Their decision to move may have been partly influenced by a desire to help their sons' education and to plan for their future university studies.

After Bach's sixteen years employed as organist, Concertmeister and Capellmeister in the ducal and princely courts of Weimar (1708-17) and Anhalt-Cöthen (1717-23), his new job in Leipzig, as Cantor at St Thomas's School and Director of Music for the town, was a step down, socially. But from the boys' point of view it made good sense. In Cöthen, where Prince Leopold was Calvinist, the principal school had provided a Calvinist education. Only the second-best school provided a Lutheran education. Bach's Lutheran faith was undoubtedly a central aspect of his make-up. By moving to Leipzig, Bach and his wife were able to make sure that WFB and his younger brothers would receive a solid training at St. Thomas's, one of the leading Lutheran schools in Germany. Equally important was the fact that completion of this education would bring them the automatic right of inscription at Leipzig's very prestigious university.

The University of Leipzig, the third oldest in Germany, was founded in 1409. For WFB to enroll there in 1729 was comparable to an American

student today enrolling at a university founded in 1689, three hundred and twenty years ago—older than Dartmouth College (founded 1769), Rutgers (1766), Brown (1764), Columbia (1754), Princeton (1746), Penn (1740), Yale (1701), or even William & Mary (1693); studying at Leipzig carried a sense of history and intellectual excellence for which a modern American student would have only one comparable institution: Harvard (founded in 1636). Almost immediately on arrival in Leipzig, in December 1723, JSB put the thirteen-year-old WFB's name down on the inscription list for entry to the university. This gesture tells us a great deal about the parental pressures at work on the Bach boys (as well as the hopes and aspirations of their parents) and draws attention to the family reasons behind the move to Leipzig.

JSB and Anna Magdalena paid a heavy price for this improvement in their children's prospects. Accepting the Leipzig job brought a large reduction in salary. Monetary concerns were accentuated by the fact that Anna Magdalena, an excellent professional singer who had been well paid as a court singer in Cöthen, could no longer have such a salary in conservative Lutheran Leipzig since, as a woman, she was not allowed to sing in church. Nor was there any immediate prospect that she might sing at the Leipzig opera. It had been founded in 1692-93, but had been closed down in 1720, partly for debts accumulated during the previous five years and partly because certain members of the city council disapproved of opera as worldly and immoral.

This objectively gloomy financial situation was supposed to be offset by the possibility of his being able to earn money from extracurricular commercial activities. His first decade in Leipzig was marked by frequent problems relating to this point. In a series of inelegant administrative skirmishes, he repeatedly had to defend his right to provide music for

university ceremonies. These supplementary sources of income (known as *Accidentia*), which included the provision of music for important civic events, weddings, and funerals, etc., all turned out to be less lucrative than had been announced at his job interview. This helps explain Bach's famous complaint in 1730 that Leipzig was too healthy a city and not enough people died! He also tried commercial publication of his keyboard music, issuing his harpsichord *Partitas* (BWV 825-30) yearly from 1725 until 1731. Every little thing that related to any extra payments to him became contentious grounds for defensive action on his part. JSB never made much of a financial success of his life. If the Bachs went to Leipzig hoping the opera could be revived, their hopes would have been definitively dashed when the opera house was pulled down in 1729.

But that year, just as one door closed, another opened, leading Bach to divert much of his creative energy (which had been heavily invested for the five previous years in writing cantatas and passions) away from writing still more new sacred music for St Thomas's School. And anyway, he was experiencing increasingly stressful conflicts with his colleagues at the school. So he turned to happier and more secular musical activities with the university students of the Collegium. These concerts were probably seen as another little money-making scheme, with an eye to some financial gain.

The fact that he could rely on his wife and sons to participate musically no doubt helped matters considerably and made the practical details easier to organize. But not even the talented Bach family could run such a series of concerts entirely on family resources, especially one that included ensemble works such as concertos for multiple harpsichords. In 1729 Bach sent off to the university not just WFB but also his classmates, including some talented boys for whose musical education Bach had been responsible for the previous

five years. They had been trained to sing, to play various instruments, including violin, viola, cello, flute, oboe, and keyboards, and in some cases to compose as well. Few things can have been more frustrating for Bach during his “day job” at St. Thomas’s than to see the boys he had trained for five years disappear from the school just when they had acquired decent technical skills and reached some sort of musical maturity. For the Collegium he could therefore now call on the help of other freshmen at the university, boys who (like WFB) had just matriculated from St Thomas’s. Working with the best of these young musicians must have provided some of the happiest experiences in JSB’s musical life in Leipzig, free from the constraints and exigencies of the job at St. Thomas’s.

Many of the performances of the Collegium took place on Friday evenings in Zimmermann’s coffee house (and in summer on Wednesday afternoons, in the open air in Zimmermann’s gardens). Leipzig’s first coffee houses had opened in 1694 and several had sprung up in the following decades. For university students in Leipzig, Friday night on the town could take in drinking coffee and hearing excellent new music played by their friends, under JSB’s direction, at Zimmermann’s. (The building no longer exists, having been bombed by the Allies during the Second World War.)

The program often started with some sort of overture, but not necessarily one of Bach’s four surviving Overtures, or Orchestral Suites (BWV 1066-69). There followed a mixture of vocal and ensemble music, which probably took place amid the general noise of people talking in the coffee shop. This is no doubt the reason why Bach’s famous “Coffee Cantata” (BWV 211) starts not with an overture but a comic-dramatic recitative in which the soprano confronts her audience immediately, saying “Schweigst stille! Plaudert nicht / Und höret, was jetzund geschicht!” (“Be quiet! Don’t chatter! / Listen to

what’s happening over here!”). The Collegium’s performers of instrumental sonatas and concertos must have faced the same problem of having to start playing over the general din of relaxed Friday-night chatter and the clink of coffee cups.

Works like the “Coffee Cantata” and these concertos remind us what a different view of Bach we would probably now have if the Leipzig opera house had not been closed and pulled down. Bach is in various ways a victim of the shadow cast by his extraordinary sacred works. After World War II, writers in Communist (and officially atheistic) East Germany were intent to stress that “Bach the worker”, a man of the people, simply composed the sacred music that his municipal employers paid him to write. They noted that the works he chose to compose for the Collegium were written “for the people” and show a totally different side to Bach. In this view, Bach is seen rather like some painters who worked predominantly for churches, producing a large body of public paintings of saints, miracles, crucifixions, and angels, but also produced, in their quieter private moments, scenes of bucolic frolicking, and images of domestic daily life that were amusing (even arousing). However, the idea of Bach as a proto-atheist is hard to swallow and we don’t need the perspective of Communist Socialism to discern some truth in the point that Bach radically adapted the style of his works to the social circumstances for which they were written. This serves as a healthy corrective to people who (following Philipp Spitta, 140 years ago) see him simply as the “Fifth Evangelist”.

That JSB had a great and earthy sense of humor and lively fun must have been evident to people who knew him. It is also obvious to anyone who listens to these concertos. They show how limited and inaccurate is the forbidding view of Bach (alas, still held by many people) as a stuffy old Cantor who



produced an endless series of solemn cantatas and passions that are full of morally edifying messages about sin and repentance, and all written in convoluted contrapuntal styles that were already out of date when he wrote them. Of course, there's nothing wrong with those great sacred works, all written in his "day job" at St. Thomas's, but there's a time and a place for everything. JSB's secular compositions provide a vivid contrast, showing us a different side to his musical personality. Even Bach's critics at the time noted that when he wrote for the Collegium his musical style was more popular and up-to-date. These concertos give us the "unbuttoned Bach," a JSB who is no longer playing his role of "school teacher who writes complex sacred music." Brimming with bouncing rhythms and catchy tunes, they were designed for an evening concert with a relaxed audience that was looking for musical pleasure and distraction. The music seems to bubble forth irrepressibly, as from a fountain. (Indeed, the word Bach in German means a water source, a brook, stream or spring, and the pun was well known within the family.) Today, people leave concerts of these concertos whistling the tunes; it takes no leap of the imagination to assume they left Zimmermann's in the same way.

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As a musical form, the concerto as we know it—with a virtuoso soloist in dialogue with an accompanying instrumental band—was essentially developed in Italy by composers of violin music. Bach's interest in writing Italianate concertos clearly dates back to his years as organist in Weimar (1708-17), and specifically to the years 1713-15. In 1714 he was promoted to court Concertmeister (with a large increase in salary) and took charge of

organizing chamber music at the ducal court. This promotion probably came about partly as a result of his creative work performing instrumental concertos on the organ in the years 1713-15. The impetus behind the writing of his first original concertos for solo keyboard and strings (among the earliest ever made) seems to have sprung from an initial period during which he made transcriptions for organ of Italian concertos written for strings. In this way the seeds were sown for a radical shift in the history of the concerto, which until then had been essentially Italian and violinistic. What happened at Weimar in 1713-15 laid the grounds for Germany to become the main country in the development of the concerto for keyboard, with the hundred or so works of his sons leading eventually to the keyboard concertos of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

Also at Weimar at that time were two other people passionately interested in writing concertos: Duke Johann Ernst von Sachsen-Weimar (1696-1715), and the composer Johann Gottfried Walther (1684-1748).

Johann Ernst, a young member of the ducal family in Weimar, studied music and composition with Walther but died prematurely, at the age of eighteen. He was a talented composer, keyboard player, and violinist (six concertos by him survive). The prince had studied in Utrecht, in Holland, returning to Weimar in 1713. He could therefore have brought back a printed copy of Vivaldi's famous set of twelve concertos op. 3, published in Amsterdam in 1711, and one of the most influential publications of the time. The young prince possibly also acquired manuscripts of Vivaldi's op. 7 concertos (to which Bach seems to have had access before their publication in 1720).

As for Walther, who was JSB's cousin, he was an excellent organist and composer. In 1739 he claimed to have written or transcribed for organ at least

seventy-eight works by other composers, giving him an important place in the history of keyboard transcriptions of Italianate concertos. The two cousins may have worked closely together in a complementary fashion on a large project of transcribing Italianate concertos, since they never seem to have transcribed the same works. Unfortunately only fifteen concertos by Walther are now known to survive: one original composition; and fourteen derived from concertos of the Italians Torelli, Taglietti, Albinoni, and Vivaldi, as well as from works by the German Telemann and the mysterious “Blamr” (who may be the Frenchman Collin de Blamont).

Bach’s surviving concerto transcriptions from this period comprise sixteen solo concertos for keyboard (BWV 972-87), along with five other solo concertos for organ with obbligato pedals (BWV 592-96). It is possible that, as with Walther, more concertos were also transcribed but that they have been lost. Most of these works are thought to have been written in the years 1713-15, between Johann Ernst’s return from Utrecht and his death. Twelve of JSB’s transcriptions are based on Italian models by Vivaldi (nine), B. Marcello (one), A. Marcello (one), and Torelli (one). Others are based on Italianate works by German composers, namely the young Johann Ernst (four) and Telemann (one); the sources for three have still not been identified. With these transcriptions, he gave himself a thorough apprenticeship in how Italian concertos were written.

Like Telemann and several other German composers of the period, Bach adopted (and adapted) the Italian idea, found in the works of Albinoni and Vivaldi, of writing a concerto in three movements (fast, slow, fast). The movements of such works were built with an essential constructional feature: the use of “ritornellos” (sections that return). These ritornellos are passages for the full instrumental group, known as the “ripieno” (meaning

“filled out”) or “tutti” (meaning “everyone” plays). The ritornellos repeat material first heard in the opening paragraph of music. They tend to be harmonically static because they begin and end in the same key. But different statements of the ritornello material will be presented in different keys, underpinning a strong harmonic structure that is articulated by tonality. A simple and fairly standard approach has the opening and closing ritornellos in the home key of the work (the tonic) and the intermediate ritornellos in the other closely-related keys (usually the dominant, the subdominant, and perhaps the relative major or minor).

Such returning blocks of music are rather like pillars holding up the musical vault. They tend to contain the main tunes, the most memorable melodies of the movement. Since the ritornellos are presented in varying keys but are harmonically static, a musical means is needed of getting from one key to another (namely, modulating). This is one of the structural functions of the passages between the ritornello pillars. These intermediate passages, or episodes, can be thought of as the arches linking the pillars. Here the themes change and tend to be less memorable, and the music is less static, more adventurous. The musical texture is also essentially different, being no longer played by the full band of the ripieno but given to the soloists and a simple and light accompaniment, known as the “concertino” (“little concerto”).

Bach’s twenty-one early concerto transcriptions make up one of the most curious bodies of music in his output and are the subject of considerable scholarly debate. This discussion spills over, casting shadows—and light—on the later Collegium concertos recorded here. These questions have affected some of our interpretational decisions for these recordings. The sixteen early concertos for manuals alone are notated on two staves



(apparently for left hand and right hand) and are therefore usually assumed to be for solo harpsichord, whereas those “for organ” are notated on three staves, because of the pedal part. However, scholars have wondered whether the two-stave/three-stave distinction has meaning; perhaps the two-stave works are simply for organ without pedals? Or were they conceived more flexibly, as “organ works designed to be also playable on the harpsichord”?

Equally important is the question of whether they are they really “solo concertos”, supposed to be played by a keyboard alone, as the modern editions seem to imply. Since none of them survives with a string accompaniment, they are usually played today (if at all) without strings, as solo keyboard works that, while remaining strictly within the keyboard parameters, evoke the orchestral concertos of the original composer. In some cases, the tonality of the transcription is the same as in the original violin concerto; here there is no problem in using the original orchestral string parts to accompany Bach’s two-stave keyboard score (which replaces the music for the violin soloist and its accompaniment). In other cases, where Bach’s keyboard score is notated at a different pitch from the original, could this be because the organ played by the soloist was at a different pitch, meaning that its solo part had to be written out, whereas the string players could continue to play in the original key? More research needs to be done in this area, but it seems clear that some of the solo concertos that survive without string accompaniments could also have been played—at least sometimes—with the string parts that belonged with the original violin versions of the concertos, in which case they would no longer be “solo concertos” but simply keyboard concertos.

By contrast, although the later Collegium works recorded here do survive with string parts, we can nevertheless legitimately ask whether we always

need to play them. Are they sometimes “ad libitum”, to be played if desired, possible, or convenient? Many of the concertos work well without any accompaniment. I know I seem to be making the perverse suggestion that when there isn’t any accompaniment we might sometimes add it, and when there is an accompaniment we might sometimes omit it. Yet such a relaxed view of the works would be in keeping with early eighteenth-century practice. These ambiguities are not really problems. Rather, they are part of the fascinating evidence for Bach’s personal musical evolution as he digested the implications of the Italian concerto form.

For example, the concerto in C major for two harpsichords (BWV 1061), recorded here, survives with string parts that are stylistically not quite “Bachian”. Were they added by one of JSB’s sons? If so, this could have been done either with the old man’s approval or sometime after his death. But even in the late eighteenth century it was acknowledged that this concerto absolutely does not need the orchestral parts to make a splendid effect and that it was composed to be autonomous without them. We therefore perform it here without the strings.

The concerto in A minor for four harpsichords (BWV 1065) seems to me to be a comparable case. It is an arrangement of Vivaldi’s concerto for four violins, published in 1711 in his op. 3 Amsterdam collection. I do not know of any documentary justification for playing it without the strings, but (the proof of the pudding being in the eating) we offer this popular concerto here twice: first, in an experimental version without the string accompaniments; and second, as the work survives in the source, with the strings. When the strings are present, certain passages are more forceful and the architecture of the work is clearer; but when they are omitted, the clarity of the four harpsichords gains considerably. For me, one crucial point is also that when

the strings are omitted the left hand parts—which are precisely the new bits that Bach had to add when adapting this concerto from violins to keyboards—are more audible. All the rest of the notes are by Vivaldi. I like being able to hear these special bits that JSB composed.

In Bach's day, when an orchestral accompaniment was used, the ripieno parts could normally have been played by a band of five solo string players, with just one player on each part (although if more players were available to join in the tutti section, that was fine, too). Our performances are therefore not at all minimalist. Using forces comparable to those planned by Bach simply makes it much easier to achieve the ideal balance between all the instruments, and the resulting textural transparency allows the ear to enjoy more of the complexities and contrasts that the composer planned. In other words, it's both easier and better.

The elements of contrast that are built into the very structure of concertos are essential: contrast between the full band's unmodulating ritornellos (ripieno pillars) and the lighter, modulating episodes (concertino arches). A further defining difference between the ripieno and concertino sections is that the soloist is assumed to be in possession of a more virtuosic instrumental technique, so the writing of the solo part is very difficult whereas the parts of the ripieno players are less technically demanding. The result is that the ripieno ritornellos are solidly reassuring while the concertino episodes are brilliantly exciting. At their best, they can be thrilling to listen to (and dangerous to perform). What a perfect musical vehicle this was for Bach to throw a bright spotlight on his extraordinary soloist sons and for them to show off in front of their friends who were playing the ripieno or listening in the audience!

Apart from the twenty-one early concertos transcribed without accompaniment, discussed earlier, twenty-four further concertos by JSB survive, among which are the thirteen harpsichord concertos recorded here. There has been considerable scholarly discussion about whether the fact that JSB performed these concertos some fifteen years later with the student performers of the Leipzig Collegium also implies that he actually composed them at that time for the Collegium concerts. On balance, the answer is that he probably did not, since several of them are revised transcriptions of known earlier pieces. Others bear all the marks of being revised transcriptions of Bachian works that do not now survive.

We have not included two works. The concerto in A minor for flute, violin, and harpsichord (BWV 1044) is a curious arrangement of movements from his solo harpsichord work BWV 894 and his organ trio sonata BWV 527. We omitted this piece because it is by no means clear that JSB himself was responsible for the transcription. The fifth Brandenburg Concerto, by contrast, is a brilliant work in which the concertino is comprised of the same three instruments. We did not include this piece because it belongs with the five other Brandenburgs.

It is a sign of Bach's emancipation from the Italian models he had so studiously examined in the years 1713-15 that, by the time he was transcribing concertos for the Collegium fifteen years later, the originals almost all seem to have been his own new compositions.

The one exception to this pattern is:  
— **BWV 1065**: the four-harpsichord concerto in A minor, arranged from Vivaldi's op. 3 no. 10.

Four of the concertos recorded here are revisions of earlier JSB concertos

that survive and use a violin as the solo instrument:

— **BWV 1054:** the solo concerto in D major is an arrangement of the violin concerto in E major (BWV 1042), thought to have been written before 1730.

— **BWV 1057:** the concerto in F major for harpsichord and two recorders is an arrangement of the fourth Brandenburg Concerto, in G major (BWV 1049), finished in Cöthen by March 1721; parts of it may well have been written even earlier in Weimar, possibly around 1715.

— **BWV 1058:** the solo concerto in G minor is an arrangement of the violin concerto in A minor (BWV 1041), thought to have been written before 1730.

— **BWV 1062:** the two-harpsichord concerto in C minor is an arrangement probably made in around 1736 of the concerto in D minor for two violins (BWV 1043), originally written some years earlier.

In these five concertos, the original solo violin parts are adapted as harpsichord right-hand parts and left-hand parts are added. Also, all five transcriptions are a whole step lower than the violin original.

Six of the other concertos recorded here are assumed to be comparable adaptations from earlier concertos also by Bach, but of original works that are now lost. The original key cannot always be easily determined; in cases where the original instrument was probably an oboe, JSB may have decided on a different degree of transposition.

— **BWV 1052:** the solo concerto in D minor appears clearly to be an arrangement of a lost violin concerto, no doubt also in D minor. The original is easy to reconstruct since JSB incorporated much of the music into the *sinfonia* to a cantata.

— **BWV 1053:** the solo concerto in E major is probably an arrangement of an earlier lost concerto, possibly composed for oboe.

— **BWV 1055:** the solo concerto in A major is probably an arrangement of

an earlier lost concerto, possibly composed for oboe d'amore.

— **BWV 1056:** the solo concerto in F minor is probably (at least in part) an arrangement of an earlier lost concerto, possibly composed for oboe.

— **BWV 1060:** the other two-harpsichord concerto in C minor, thought to date from about 1736, is probably an arrangement of an earlier lost concerto. Different scholars have claimed it was in D minor (for oboe and violin) or, more recently, in C minor (for two violins).

— **BWV 1064:** the three-harpsichord concerto in C major is thought to date from about 1730. Was it derived from an earlier concerto for three violins? Was that concerto by Bach? It has been reconstructed in both C major and D major. In the surviving revised version, the three harpsichordists are given unusually different solo cadenzas whose styles almost seem to break the boundaries of JSB's normal practice. The very difficult cadenza for the second harpsichord is extremely violinistic and oddly suited to the harpsichord; but perhaps here Bach the father let the Bach sons make the adaptations themselves, which could explain why they feel a little less idiomatic.

The cases where JSB transposed concertos down by a whole step for the harpsichord are often said to be explainable by the fact that the highest note normally in use on the baroque violin was high e<sup>3</sup>, whereas the highest note on the most up-to-date harpsichords in the late 1720s was a high d<sup>3</sup>, but this is hardly a sufficient reason. I find it strange to imagine that he could have gone to the very considerable trouble of retranscribing everything and transposing the whole work (with all the potential this had for errors of accidentals), just to deal with a couple of high notes in the solo part. A more typically Bachian solution would have been to rewrite those measures so as to avoid the high notes. He did this in other keyboard works, distorting fugue themes to avoid a top note his keyboard didn't have. The transpositions are

therefore more likely to have been made for reasons of comfortable and effective tessitura in general, rather than simply a matter of a few high notes.

Two concertos are not included in the above lists.

— **BWV 1061:** the unaccompanied two-harpsichord concerto in C major, whose doubtful string parts were discussed above, appears to have been written in about 1732-35 as an original piece for two solo harpsichords; it is not a transcription.

— **BWV 1063:** the three-harpsichord concerto in D minor appears to be a new composition dating from the 1730s, conceived from the start for keyboards.

So Bach's concerto-writing activity that had started in 1713-15 with the numerous transcriptions for harpsichord and organ of Italian models, passed through the composition of original concertos for other instruments and then went on to the transcriptions for harpsichord(s) of these original works he had written. And these two superb concertos that are not transcriptions (BWV 1061 and 1063) are exclusively Bachian in form and conception. But Bach had not yet come full circle. This only happened with the composition of the *Concerto nach italiänischem Gusto* (the Italian Concerto, BWV 971), composed for solo two-manual harpsichord without any accompaniment. It was published in 1735 as the opening piece of volume two of his *Clavierübung*. The Italian Concerto is an entirely original work, completely liberated from the Weimar transcription-concertos, and freed from all the residue of violinistic figuration that remains in many of the later works transcribed for harpsichord. The Italian Concerto is fully Bachian in conception, and conceived in purely keyboard terms. If its Italian roots are clear, these can be seen as a masterly homage to the country whose music had taught Bach so much. The Italian Concerto was understood, even by Bach's biting critic

Johann Adolph Scheibe (1708-76), to be a work of exemplary perfection.

Bach's concertos helped him develop his highly personal ways of making contrasting musical elements work together, a process that was well suited to his intensely contrapuntal mind. He was always at his best when juggling with two or three musical ideas at once, whether simultaneously (in the form of double or triple invertible counterpoint) or in kaleidoscopic juxtapositions (as in concerto forms). The idea also bore rich fruit for him in his unique way of writing musical phrases that were comprised of small melodic or rhythmic fragments that could be tossed around, combined, extended or modified into endless permutations. This process historically turned out to be of the utmost importance for the next two centuries. It is at the heart of what composers from Haydn to Schoenberg found fascinating in Bach's music, and what made the process of musical "development" one of the foundational principles of their ways of writing serious music. It provided a rhetoric and grammar for a musical style that could be held together by a logical musical discourse, articulated as a language that conveyed a constructed thought process. It is one of the great intellectual achievements of Western Civilization.

Bach's family and friends were of course unaware of all this on those Friday evenings in the Leipzig coffee house; and we don't need this information to enjoy these works either. But it does no harm to know that these dimensions to the music do exist.

## The Harpsichords

### Nicolas Dumont (Paris, 1707)

The important Parisian harpsichord builder Nicolas Dumont became a master in the instrument makers guild in 1675 and was active until at least 1707. Three Dumont two-manual harpsichords are known to survive, dated 1697 (Paris, Musée de la musique), 1704 (formerly Paris, private collection) and this 1707 instrument. The 1697 is a Flemish-inspired instrument, while the 1704 and 1707 are the earliest examples of eighteenth-century Parisian harpsichords.

The 1707 is the first with a five-octave (FF-e<sup>3</sup>) range. It was purchased by Count Pierre de Marcieu in 1719 for his country estate, the Château du Touvet in Isère (Southern France). Hidden in a granary during the French Revolution it was rediscovered in the 1970s, then restored by Hubert Bédard (1975-1977) and by Dominique Leperle (1996). Sheridan Germann restored the soundboard decoration. Despite 80 years of service, 180 years in the granary and two restorations, it remains in substantially original condition. It is voiced in bird quill.

### Ioannes Ruckers (Antwerp, 1635)

This previously unknown harpsichord resurfaced in an auction in Paris in 1997. Nothing is known of its provenance. The exquisite soundboard decoration is original, as are the printed interior and keywell papers. Although initially a single-manual instrument (45-notes, C/E-c<sup>3</sup>) with a unique disposition of two eight-foot and one four-foot registers, it was converted around 1700, enlarging the range to 48 notes (C, D-c<sup>3</sup>), adding two new keyboards, sliding coupler, jacks and registers.

The instrument was modified again in the mid-eighteenth century, adding four notes (BB, C#, and c#<sup>3</sup>, d<sup>3</sup>) and a dog-legged upper manual, typical of Flemish work. A scratched-out date on the lowest four-foot jack may read 1753. John Phillips of Berkeley, California restored it to its mid-eighteenth century state in 2005. It is voiced in bird quill.

### Anonymous Spanish (c. 1700-1725)

This anonymous instrument, formerly owned by Rafael Puyana (Paris), was found in the 1970s in Carmel de Las Batuecas, the region of Las Hurdes between Salamanca and the Portuguese border. Features similar to its double bentside, pine case, sawn cheek scrolls, and exterior moldings are found in regional Spanish harpsichords. The bold attack, long sustaining power and vocal coloring of the sound are uniquely Spanish. Few Spanish harpsichords are extant, and of those remaining only a few are playable.

The disposition of this instrument with two eight-foot registers and scaling for brass stringing is unusual. A fifty-note (GG/BB-c<sup>3</sup>) keyboard compass suggests a date from the first part of the eighteenth century. This harpsichord has survived in substantially original condition. Its faux marble/peacock feather decoration is probably early work. First restored by Johannes Carda (1979), its keyboard and about half of the jacks are original. In a second restoration by John Phillips of Berkeley, California, (2007), it was restrung in brass and voiced in bird quill.

### Domenicus Pisauriensis, (Italian, late 16th or early 17th century)

The nameboard of this undated harpsichord bears the inscription “Domenicus Pisauriensis”, referring to Domenico of Pesaro, who was active in Venice. His authenticated instruments date from 1533 to 1575, but the authenticity of this one is not confirmed. The instrument has thin cypress case walls and edges with decorative moldings, studded with ivory buttons. Due to its unusually high stand, it was most likely played standing. The delicate inner case is protected by a decorated outer case, (c. seventeenth-century), with a lid painting depicting Mary Magdalene and King David. It has a keyboard range of (GG, AA-c<sup>3</sup>) and two eight-foot registers.

Acquired at auction in Paris, the harpsichord was previously owned by Rafael Puyana (Paris) and restored by Johannes Carda. When restored by Tom and Barbara Wolf of The Plains, Virginia, in 2007, it was restrung in brass and voiced in bird quill.

**Karen Flint** has been Artistic Director and harpsichordist of Brandywine Baroque since it's founding. She teaches harpsichord at the University of Delaware and has degrees from Oberlin Conservatory of Music and The University of Michigan. She has performed with the Delaware and Newark Symphonies, at The Smithsonian Institution as well as often accompanying Julianne Baird in recitals. Her newly released recordings include Vocal Duets and Trios by Handel, Boismortier Cello Sonatas, *Oh! The Sweet Delights of Love*, music by Purcell and *The Lass with the Delicate Air*, English songs (Plectra). With Julianne Baird she has recorded *The Jane Austen Songbook* and *Music of Ben Franklin* (Albany). A solo recording of Chambonnières *Pièces de clavecin* is soon to be released.

**Arthur Haas**, professor of harpsichord and early music at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and on the faculty of Mannes College of Music, holds a master's degree in historical musicology from UCLA and has studied with Bess Karp, Albert Fuller and Alan Curtis. He has been Artistic Director of the Amherst Early Music Festival since 2002, and is a member of the Aulos Ensemble and Musical Assembly. In 1975 he received top prize in the Paris International Harpsichord Competition. His debut in 1985 at Alice Tully Hall was highly praised by the New York Times. His recordings include Bach Goldberg Variation Canons, Suites for Two Harpsichords by LeRoux, *Pièces de clavecin* of D'Anglebert, *Suites de clavecin* of Forqueray, Music by Purcell, and Sonatas and Suites from *Les Nations* of Couperin. His recent CD, Elisabeth de La Guerre and François Couperin (Plectra's *Le Clavecin Français*), has received much acclaim.

**JungHae Kim** holds a Bachelor's Degree from Peabody Conservatory and a Master's Degree from Oberlin Conservatory. She went on to study with Gustav Leonhardt and earned an Advanced Degree in Harpsichord at Sweelinck Conservatorium in Amsterdam. She performs in California and

throughout the United States with her group, Ensemble Mirable, and has performed with American Baroque, San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival, Musica Angelica, Music's ReCreation, Agave Baroque, and the Britt Festival Orchestra. She has performed as a soloist with the San Francisco Symphony and with New Century Chamber Orchestra.

**Davitt Moroney** has made over sixty CDs during the last thirty years, including Bach's *The Well tempered Clavier* and other major keyboard works, Byrd's complete keyboard works (7 CDs), and the complete harpsichord and organ music of L. Couperin (7 CDs). His recordings have been awarded the *Grand Prix du Disque*, the *Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik*, and three Gramophone Awards. The New York Times has said of his recordings: "Everything he touches comes up sparkling, constantly rewarding the alert ear." His book *Bach, An Extraordinary Life* was published by ABRSM Publishing in 2000 and has been translated into seven languages. In 1987, he was named *Chevalier dans l'Ordre du mérite culturel* by Prince Rainier of Monaco and, in 2000, *Officier des arts et des lettres* by the French government. He studied organ and harpsichord with Susi Jeans, Kenneth Gilbert and Gustav Leonhardt and is Professor of Music and University Organist at the University of California, Berkeley.

**Adam Pearl**, recently appointed to the early music faculty of the Peabody Conservatory, also teaches at the Amherst and Madison Early Music workshops. He performs extensively as harpsichord soloist, and also with ensembles such as Tempesta di Mare, Opera Lafayette, Richmond Symphony, Catacoustic Consort and American Bach Soloists. As Co-Music Director for American Opera Theater, he has led performances of *Venus & Adonis*, *Dido & Aeneas*, *La Calisto*, *La Didone*, Charpentier's *David et Jonathas*, and *Acis and Galatea*. In August 2004 he won third prize at the international harpsichord competition in Bruges, Belgium.