

Johann Sebastian

BACH

CANTATAS Nos. 138-141

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PREFACE

THE COMPLETE CANTATAS, as contained in the "GESAMMTAUSGABE"

The Name "Cantata" is Italian – something which is sung and is used to denote a certain type of composition viz. recitatives, solo arias, orchestral interludes. Carissimi (1606 – 1674) mentions this form of composition first, as "Cantata da chiesa," Church Cantata.

BACH composed his cantatas over a period of forty years, viz. his first one in 1704, and his last in 1744. He came to Leipzig in the year 1723 as Cantor (Choirmaster) of the Thomas Church, and brought with him some thirty composed before. At Leipzig it was his duty to provide music for all the Sundays and Principal Festival days of the Church Year, some 59 occasions. He composed 5 complete cycles for these 59 times himself or the astounding total of 295 cantatas – but in order not to repeat himself too often, he had also to copy the works of other composers. Therefore, many of the manuscripts found later on and attributed to BACH were not his at all. The mere physical feat of writing down his cantatas, oratorios, organ, calvier, and instrumental music, etc. is so tremendous that one can hardly understand how BACH with his teaching and conducting could do all this.

The Cantatas served a particular purpose in the Church Liturgy, viz. to underline the Gospel for the day. Luther, who initiated this Service, almost followed a Roman Mass – beginning with a Kyrie and a Gloria in Excelsis sung by the Choir. After then the "Epistle" was read, a hymn suitable for the occasion sung by the congregation and then the Gospel was sung from the altar. It is at this point that the Cantata was sung, the libretto of which was based on the gospel text, as far as possible. This was followed by a sermon, and then HOLY COMMUNION which brought to an end the service. It lasted from 7 in the morning to noon, and therefore the Cantata was a welcome relaxation for the congregation.

THE SECULAR CANTATAS

The Secular Cantatas are constructed in the same style as BACH's Sacred Cantatas, except for the absence of Chorals. BACH did not – as was the case with the Sacred Cantatas – have to provide music in secular style throughout the year, but only for special occasions. Therefore, the number of secular cantatas is small compared to the Sacred cantatas. About 40 are mentioned by title, though only about one half are in existence.

The occasions for these cantatas were generally the presence of some prince, mayor, or other public persons, weddings, and Public Events and Ceremonies where music was desirable. As for example:

Der Zufriedengestellte Aeolus was written to celebrate the name day of Prof. August Friedrich Mueller by his students.

Vereinigte Zwietracht was performed to honor Dr. Gottlieb Kortte's appointment as Professor of Law.

Phoebus & Pan was written for performance by Bach's Collegium Musicum.

Die Wahl des Hercules was written on occasion of the birthday of the Crown Prince of Saxony.

Toent Ihr Pauken, in honor of Queen Maria Josepha of Austria.

Auf Schmetternde Toene for the name day of Augustus III of Poland.

Preis Dein Gluecke: for Augustus III of Poland's anniversary.

Schleicht Spielende Wellen: for the birthday of Augustus III and in the presence of his queen.

There are other Cantatas which are nowadays performed often as the "Coffee Cantata" and the "Peasant Cantata," "Angenehmes Wiederau, Schwingt freudig Euch empor," Weichet nur, betruete Schatten, O Holder Tag, O Angenehme Melodei, Vergnuete Pleissen stadt, and others.

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OCCASION

Cantata No. 138 - 15th Sunday after Trinity

Cantata No. 139 - 23rd Sunday after Trinity

Cantata No. 140 - 27th Sunday after Trinity

Cantata No. 141 - 3rd Sunday in Advent

Cantate

Am fünfzehnten Sonnstage nach Trinitatis

über die drei ersten Verse des Liedes:

„**Marum betrübst du dich, mein Herz**“

Hans Sachs.

P^o 138.

„J.J. Concerto Doica 15 post Trinitatis.“

(Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz.)

(Vers 1.)

deux Hautb. d'Amour.

(NB. Der Cantus firmus: „Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz“ im Sopran.)

The first system of the musical score consists of seven staves. The top two staves are for two Horns in E-flat major (Hautb. d'Amour). The next three staves are for the piano accompaniment, including the right and left hands. The bottom two staves are for the vocal parts, with the soprano part containing the cantus firmus. The music is in 3/4 time and E-flat major.

Wa -
Wa -
Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz, warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz? Wa -

The second system continues the musical score with seven staves. It includes the vocal parts with lyrics and the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz, warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz?". The system concludes with a vocal line "Wa -".