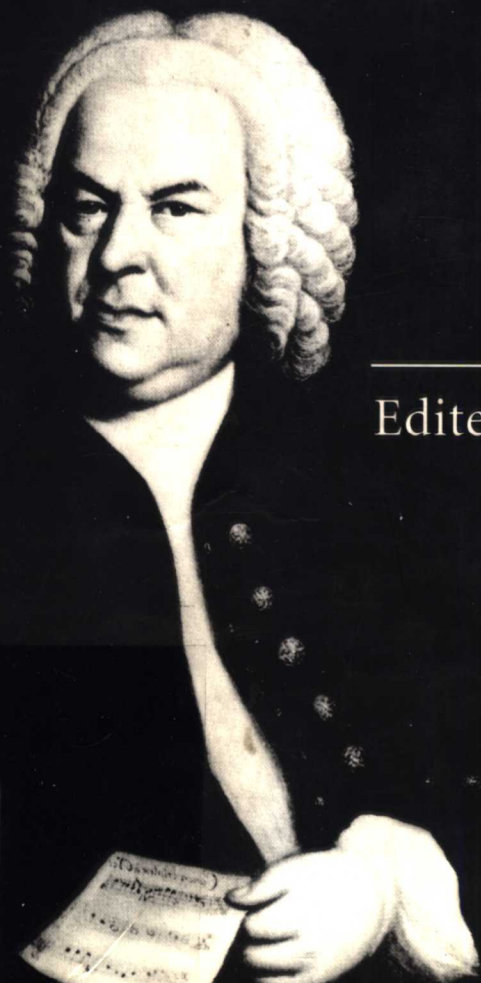




The Cambridge

Companion to

# Bach



Edited by John Butt

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# BACH

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藏书章

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**John Butt** has held positions at Aberdeen University and Magdalene College, Cambridge, and is now associate professor of music at the University of California, Berkeley. His career centres on both performance and musicological research; three books on Bach have already been published by Cambridge University Press, the latest being a survey of the educational background to practical music during the German Baroque. He has made seven solo recordings on organ and harpsichord for Harmonia Mundi.

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**Martin Zenck** has established himself as the major authority on Bach reception. His main work has been on the reception of Bach by Beethoven (one book and several articles) but he has also written essays on the position of Bach within the Second Viennese school (*Bach Studies*, Cambridge University Press).

## Abbreviations

<i>AfMw</i>	<i>Archiv für Musikwissenschaft</i>
<i>BACH</i>	<i>BACH – The Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute</i>
<i>BC</i>	<i>Bach Compendium: Analytisch-bibliographisches Repertorium der Werke Johann Sebastian Bachs</i> , ed. H.-J. Schulze and C. Wolff (Leipzig, 1985–)
<i>BG</i>	<i>J. S. Bach: Werke</i> , ed. Bach-Gesellschaft, vols. 1–47 (Leipzig 1851–99)
<i>Bjb</i>	<i>Bach-Jahrbuch</i>
<i>BR</i>	<i>The Bach reader</i> (revised edition), ed. H. T. David and A. Mendel (New York and London, 1966)
<i>BWV</i>	W. Schmieder, ed., <i>Thematisch-systematisches Verzeichnis der musikalischen Werke von Johann Sebastian Bach: Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis (BWV)</i> , 2nd edn (Wiesbaden, 1990)
<i>BzAfMw</i>	<i>Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft</i>
<i>BzBF</i>	<i>Beiträge zur Bach-Forschung</i>
<i>CM</i>	<i>Current Musicology</i>
<i>CMS</i>	<i>College Music Symposium</i>
<i>Dok</i>	<i>Bach-Dokumente</i> , ed. W. Neumann and H.-J. Schulze, 3 vols. (Leipzig and Kassel, 1963, 1969, 1972)
<i>EM</i>	<i>Early Music</i>
<i>JAMS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Musicological Society</i>
<i>JM</i>	<i>Journal of Musicology</i>
<i>LW</i>	<i>Luther's works: American edition</i> , ed. J. Pelikan and H. T. Lehmann (St Louis and Philadelphia, 1955–86)
<i>Mf</i>	<i>Die Musikforschung</i>
<i>MGG</i>	<i>Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i>
<i>ML</i>	<i>Music and Letters</i>
<i>MMg</i>	<i>Monatshefte für Musikgeschichte</i>
<i>MQ</i>	<i>The Musical Quarterly</i>
<i>MT</i>	<i>The Musical Times</i>
<i>MuK</i>	<i>Musik und Kirche</i>

x *List of abbreviations*

- NBA *Neue Bach-Ausgabe*, ed. Johann-Sebastian-Bach-Institut, Göttingen,  
and Bach-Archiv, Leipzig (Kassel and Basle, 1954–)  
*KB Kritischer Bericht*
- NG *The new Grove dictionary of music and musicians*, 20 vols.,  
ed. S. Sadie (London, 1980)
- Notes *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association*
- NZM *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*
- OY *The Organ Yearbook*
- PRMA *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*
- WA *D. Martin Luthers Werke: kritische Gesamtausgabe* [ *Weimarer  
Ausgabe*] (Weimar, 1883–1983)  
*Br Weimarer Ausgabe: Briefe*  
*Tr Weimarer Ausgabe: Tischreden*

## *Chronology of Bach's life and career*

- 1685 21 March – Johann Sebastian Bach born in Eisenach.
- 1693 Registered at the Lateinschule, Eisenach (fifth class).
- 1695 After the recent death of both parents, Sebastian moves to Ohrdruf under guardianship of his brother, Johann Christoph. Enters the Ohrdruf Lyceum.
- 1700 Leaves Lyceum owing to lack of free place ('ob defectum hospitiorum'), transferred to the Michaelisschule, Lüneburg.
- 1703 March–September – Court musician at Weimar (*Laquey*).  
9 August – Appointed organist at the Neue Kirche, Arnstadt. Möller Manuscript begun (finished c. 1707).
- 1705 August – Bach's brawl with the bassoonist Geyserbach; departure for Lübeck and encounter with Buxtehude (returning early 1706).
- 1706 February – Consistory's complaints about Bach's prolonged absence, various other complaints concerning accompaniment and refusal to undertake concerted music.
- 1707 14–15 June – appointed organist at the Blasiuskirche, Mühlhausen (released from Arnstadt post, 29 June).  
17 October – marries Maria Barbara Bach at Dornheim (near Arnstadt). Begins Mühlhausen cantatas, e.g. BWV 4, 106, 131.
- 1708 4 February – Cantata 71 performed for changing of town council, Bach's first published work.  
25 June – Bach requests dismissal from Mühlhausen (dismissal granted following day), on his appointment as organist and chamber musician at Weimar (to Duke Wilhelm Ernst).  
29 December – baptism of Catharina Dorothea Bach (first child of Johann Sebastian and Maria Barbara Bach). Andreas Bach Book begun (finished c. 1713). *Orgelbüchlein* may have been begun as early as 1708 (most of it finished by 1717).
- 1709 7 February – payment for a further printed Mühlhausen cantata for changing of town council, with expenses for Bach's travel from Weimar (work lost).
- 1710 22 November – Wilhelm Friedemann Bach born (composer, first son of Johann Sebastian and Maria Barbara; baptised 24 November).
- 1712 27 September – Bach is godfather for baptism of son of Weimar town organist, J. G. Walther.



- 1713 c. 23 February – visit to Weissenfels on occasion of Duke Christian of Saxe-Weissenfels' birthday – probable first performance of 'Hunt' Cantata, BWV 208.  
July – Prince Johann Ernst of Saxe-Weimar returns from his study-trip to the Netherlands, bringing with him many modern Italian concertos, including Vivaldi's Op. 3.  
December – Bach is a candidate for the post of organist at the Marktkirche in Halle.
- 1714 Halle position declined.  
2 March – Bach promoted to *Konzertmeister* at Weimar, with increased salary and commission to compose monthly cantatas.  
8 March – birth of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (baptised 10 March with Georg Philipp Telemann as godfather).  
25 March (Palm Sunday) – performance of first Weimar church cantata, BWV 182.
- 1717 Earliest printed reference to Bach, in Mattheson's *Das beschützte Orchestre*.  
5 August – appointed *Kapellmeister* for Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen. Visit to Dresden for competition with Marchand (from which the latter fled).  
6 November – 2 December – Bach under arrest for too forcibly demanding dismissal. Set free with unfavourable discharge.
- 1719 1 March – Bach receives payment for travel and purchase of harpsichord in Berlin.
- 1720 22 January – begins *Clavier-Büchlein* for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach.  
May–July – Bach travels with Leopold to Karlsbad.  
Maria Barbara dies, buried 28 September.  
November – Bach applies for post of organist at the Jacobikirche, Hamburg.  
December – Bach declines post, owing to simony associated with appointment (incident recorded in Mattheson's *Der musicalische Patriot*, 1728).
- 1721 24 March – Brandenburg Concertos dedicated to Margrave Christian Ludwig.  
3 December – Bach marries Anna Magdalena Wilcke (daughter of court trumpeter at Weissenfels), in Köthen.  
Begins first *Clavier-Büchlein* for Anna Magdalena.  
Writes title page for first book of *The Well-tempered Clavier*.
- 1722 21 December – Bach becomes a candidate for the post of Cantor and *Director Musices* at the Thomasschule, Leipzig.
- 1723 February – Bach auditions in Leipzig.  
April – Bach appointed at Leipzig, receiving dismissal from Köthen.  
5 May – Bach signs contract for cantorship.

- 22 May – Bach and family arrive in Leipzig.  
30 May – first performance at Leipzig (Cantata 75), received 'mit guten applausu' – opens first Leipzig cycle of cantatas.  
14 June – Wilhelm Friedemann and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach accepted into Thomasschule.  
25 December – first (?) performance of Magnificat, BWV 243a.
- 1724 7 April – first performance of St John Passion, Nikolaikirche.  
11 June – opening of second Leipzig cycle of cantatas (Cantata 20).
- 1725 September – Bach gives an organ recital in the Sophienkirche, Dresden.  
September–December – Bach petitions Friedrich August I, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, for the restitution of his right to the 'old service' and salary, at the university church (King grants Bach's right to 'old service' and salary, 21 January 1726).  
Third Leipzig cycle of cantatas begins (lasting into 1727).  
Mattheson complains of Bach's text underlay (in Cantata 21) in his *Critica Musica*, 8.
- 1726 Publication of Partita 1, of Bach's *Clavier-Übung* (remaining five partitas published over subsequent years).
- 1727 11 April – probable first performance of St Matthew Passion.  
17 Oct – *Trauer-Ode*, Cantata 198, performed at memorial service for Electress Christiane Eberhardine (commissioned by a university student, with words by J. C. Gottsched).
- 1728 September – dispute with sub-deacon of Nikolaikirche over who should choose hymns for Vespers (customarily the prerogative of the cantor).  
19 November – Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen dies.
- 1729 23–4 March – Bach visits Köthen for performance of funeral cantata for Leopold (BWV 244a).  
April – Bach becomes sales agent for Heinichen's *Generalbaßlehre* and Walther's *Lexicon*.  
Bach takes over direction of the *Collegium musicum*.
- 1730 August – dispute with the town council, over Bach's disinclination to teach Latin.  
23 August – Bach's 'Short but most necessary draft for a well-appointed church music' sent to town council, outlining severe problems in maintaining the musical establishment at the Thomasschule.  
28 October – Bach sends letter to school friend, Georg Erdmann, expressing dissatisfaction with Leipzig and seeking employment in Danzig (Gdansk).
- 1731 All six Partitas published together as *Clavier-Übung* I.  
14 September – Bach gives an organ recital in Sophienkirche, Dresden, and other performances at court during following week.

- 1732 21 June – Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach born.  
Short biography of Bach appears in Walther's *Lexicon* – here Bach has title of 'Sachsen-Weißenfelsischer Capell-Meister', which he presumably received some time after death of Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen.
- 1733 Bach composes and performs several cantatas in honour of the new Elector, Friedrich August II, and his family (BWV 213, 214, Anh. 12).  
23 June – Wilhelm Friedemann Bach appointed organist of Sophienkirche, Dresden.  
July – Bach presents *Missa* (Kyrie and Gloria, of what later became Mass in B Minor) to Friedrich August II, with request for a court title.
- 1734 Bach composes and performs more cantatas in honour of Friedrich August II, including BWV 215, performed in his presence for the Michaelmas Fair, 5 October.  
25–7 December – Christmas Oratorio, parts I-III performed.
- 1735 1–6 January – Christmas Oratorio, parts IV-VI performed.  
Bach is sales agent for harpsichord works by C. F. Hurlbusch.  
*Clavier-Übung II* published.  
June – Johann Gottfried Bernhard Bach appointed organist at the Marienkirche, Mühlhausen.  
5 September – Johann Christian Bach born.
- 1736 Easter – Publication of G. C. Schemelli's *Musicalisches Gesangbuch*, advertised as containing some new melodies and bass-lines by Bach.  
July – dispute begins with Rector Ernesti over the right to appoint prefects in the school (continues until early 1738).  
7 October – Bach performs birthday cantata in honour of Friedrich August II.  
19 November – Bach given title of *Hofcompositeur* to the Elector of Saxony, Friedrich August II.  
1 December – Bach gives an organ recital in the Dresden Frauenkirche, in the presence of the Russian ambassador.
- 1737 April – Johann Gottfried Bernhard Bach appointed organist of the Jakobikirche, Sangerhausen (he is soon to fall into debt and abscond).  
14 May – J. A. Scheiße criticises Bach and his music in *Der critische Musicus*, sparking pamphlet war over Bach's merits as a composer.  
17 December – Friedrich August II intervenes in prefects' dispute, on Bach's behalf.
- 1738 27 April – Bach performs cantata in presence of Friedrich August II at Leipzig Easter Fair.  
Carl Philipp Emanuel appointed harpsichordist to Frederick of Prussia (later Frederick II ('the Great')).
- 1739 March – Bach cancels Passion performance owing to dispute with town council.  
27 May – Johann Gottfried Bernhard Bach dies.

October – Bach takes over *Collegium musicum* after a two-year break.

7 October – Bach performs birthday cantata for Friedrich August II  
*Clavier-Übung* III published.

Bach gives organ recital in the Schlosskirche, Altenburg. Bach probably began work on compiling/copying *The Well-tempered Clavier* Book II (finished c. 1742).

1740 3 August – Bach performs cantata for name-day of Friedrich August II.

1741 Anna Magdalena very ill during Bach's visit to Carl Philipp Emanuel in Berlin.

*Clavier-Übung* IV ('Goldberg Variations') published.

1742 Bach drafted early version of *The Art of Fugue* around this time.

1745 Bach is sales agent for Wilhelm Friedemann's harpsichord sonata in D.

1746 April – Wilhelm Friedemann Bach becomes organist of the Marktkirche (Liebfrauenkirche), Halle.

After 1746 (1748?) – 'Schübler' chorales published.

1747 May – Bach visits Potsdam court of Frederick II of Prussia; plays at court and the Heiligegeistkirche; probably also visits Berlin and its new opera house at this time.

June – Bach joins Mizler's Corresponding Society of the Musical Sciences.

Canonic Variations on 'Vom Himmel hoch' presented to society and published.

September – *Musical Offering* published.

1748 Bach is sales agent for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach's harpsichord sonata in E♭.

1749 20 January – Bach's daughter Elisabeth Juliana Friederica marries Johann Christoph Altnikol.

8 June – Gottlob Harrer auditions for Bach's post in Leipzig.

Bach's work on the Mass in B Minor probably completed.

1750 Bach directing work on *Art of Fugue* engraving.

March – Bach has eye operation.

28 July – Bach dies.

1751 *Art of Fugue* published.

1754 Bach's Obituary (by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and Johann Friedrich Agricola) published by Mizler.

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- 4 Franz Anton Hoffmeister's edition of *The Well-tempered Clavier*, issued between 1801 and 1803, first page of Book II [208]
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# Introduction

John Butt

## The context and aims of the project

Twenty years ago it would have been relatively easy to predict the contents of a *Cambridge companion to Bach*: a basic introduction to the composer's life and works, fundamental information to enhance analysis and appreciation, perhaps also a summary of recent research and performance. While the present volume hardly represents a radical departure from this brief, the situation is now considerably more complex than it was in the 1970s. First, with the publication of the *New Grove dictionary of music and musicians* and several important monographs on the life and works of J. S. Bach, there is already a sizeable and reliable literature for readers of every level. Secondly, there is the mushrooming of published material throughout all fields of music scholarship: now it is virtually impossible to do justice to every slant, every area of study, even to every field of Bach's compositional output. Finally, there are the interesting issues concerning musicology that have come to the fore during the last decade or so: what actually is music scholarship? what are its aims? how much should we be catering for 'music appreciation'? what is the significance today of a 'great' composer?

Bach studies have, in fact, set the tone for much music scholarship during the last thirty years. With the spectacular revisions to the chronology of Bach's cantatas in the late 1950s by Alfred Dürr and Georg von Dadelsen, overthrowing many fundamental assumptions about Bach's creative life and ever-increasing piety,<sup>1</sup> the next two decades were dominated by a style of research that valued certifiable fact above critical judgement or informed opinion. Much has changed during the last decade or so: 'positivism' – as the activity of fact-gathering has, somewhat grandly, been named – has often been branded the occupation only of the dull and bibliographically-minded, while 'criticism' and – most importantly – interdisciplinary work are, to some, the direction for the elect.<sup>2</sup>

Of course, this attitude may not always take it into account that not all 'new musicology' achieves Olympian heights of insight and inspiration and that 'positivism', at its best, often produces information that is of enduring value, providing the basis for a wide range of interpretative

approaches. Furthermore, the vast majority of 'newer musicology' is concerned with music of the nineteenth century and beyond, the era in which musical culture becomes self-reflective and concerned with its own hermeneutic richness; in other words, only composers later than Bach have so far proved suitable objects for the (post)modern approaches. I suspect that many people who are attracted to Bach, as listeners, musicians or scholars, find it difficult to question what they see as the innate quality of his music. To the 'Bach believer' this music may seem to exist on its own terms, to a degree enjoyed by virtually no other repertory; only the plethora of attitudes towards Bach tend to be open for discussion and evaluation.

On the other hand, given that there is much new critical work on the Renaissance and early Baroque, it might not be too long before Bach is drawn into the 'new musicological' fold. There is a small but growing body of writing linking Bach's career and compositional achievements to a specific cultural and social commentary,<sup>3</sup> and Adorno's occasional use of Bach and the concept of counterpoint in his more abstract cultural theory has been emulated and developed in recent years by the work of Edward Said.<sup>4</sup> Bach has also made a tentative entrance into the field of gender studies.<sup>5</sup>

Of course, many readers will find these more radical approaches irrelevant – at best – to Bach studies and appreciation. Yet few could maintain that Bach is entirely unaffected by the turn against the factual and the certain. Indeed, it is almost ironic that a general concern with criticism and hermeneutics has engendered a return to something of the style of scholarship that was prevalent before the positivist revolution of the late 1950s. Eric Chafe's recent book on allegory in Bach's music can almost be seen as an update of the theological-hermeneutic approach of earlier scholars, such as Friedrich Smend.<sup>6</sup> At the very least, studies of this kind provide material for a type and level of debate that was all but impossible during the 1960s and 70s. Bibliographic, factual scholarship still provides the mainstay of Bach studies; indeed, the sources are still by no means comprehensively examined, and, if they were, each new generation would continue to bring new approaches and outlooks that might ask new questions and, indeed, find new 'facts'. But the most productive sign of a newer approach to Bach scholarship is the widening of the field by scholars who have already proved their qualifications in studies of the sources and historical context.

One of the primary aims of this *Companion* is to show both the achievements of Bach research and the possibilities for further directions. It is designed to provide much of the background information for Bach's career and social context together with proposals for the analysis and



understanding of the music. The foremost purpose might be to offer a companion to 'thinking about Bach', the angles from which he and his music might be viewed. There is, after all, no extant study that attempts to summarise much of the current thinking on Bach and his oeuvre. We need an introduction to this great composer from perspective of the late twentieth century, something which will appeal to a wide readership, going beyond a basic biographical 'life and works' study.

*The Cambridge companion to Bach* draws on a remarkably rich consortium of Bach scholars – German, American and British – all commissioned to present material which summarises the current state of Bach research while pointing towards possible directions for further enquiry. The book is designed in three major sections: 1. the historical context of Bach, the society, beliefs and world-view of his age; 2. profiles of the music, and Bach's compositional stance; 3. finally, influence and reception, a field that is central to cultural history today and one that is relatively new in Bach research. The bibliography provides an up-to-date, but critically selective list of the most important writings to appear since the *New Grove* publication; it also lists some of the more enduring writings from earlier years.

## Summary of chapters

The *Companion* begins with Malcolm Boyd's examination of the phenomenon of the musical family, considering the extent to which this reflects the conception of music as a craft to be passed from one generation to another. This chapter provides a useful background to the Bach family as a whole and to the shape of Bach's career with regard to the family tradition. In Chapter 2 Ulrich Siegele examines the shape of Bach's Leipzig career within the political context of his age, showing how most of his conflicts with the school and town council stemmed from his attempts to fulfil an absolutist commission within a municipal city. It is impossible that Bach could have stood apart from the local and state political conflicts of his age. This angle, virtually ignored in the past, illuminates many aspects of his creative personality which are usually seen as belonging exclusively to the religious or 'purely musical' realms.

In recent years, the religious context of Bach's career has regained something of its former status as a primary focus of Bach studies. However, there is not much reliable general information on the actual quality and shape of religious practice in Bach's age; much previous writing is overly conditioned by the authors' own confessional beliefs and thus often fails to recognise the diversity of Reformation traditions, even