

April 30, May 4, 2011
Hal Sheeler, Music Director
Herbert Blomstedt, Guest Conductor
Matthew Wiencke, Accompanist/Pianist

Mass in B Minor

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Kyrie eleison — *Chorus*
Christe eleison — *Faith Henrickson, Betsy Alexander*
Kyrie eleison — *Ensemble*
Gloria — *Chorus*
Laudamus te — *Sue Ann Evans*
Gratias agimus tibi — *Chorus*
Domine Deus — *Sue Ann Evans, Richard McGaw*
Qui tollis — *Ensemble*
Qui sedes — *Laurel Stavis*
Quoniam — *Albert Craig*
Cum sancto spiritu — *Chorus*
Credo — *Chorus*
Patrem omnipotentem — *Ensemble*
Et in unum Deum — *Karen Smith, Betsy Alexander*
Et incarnatus est — *Ensemble*
Crucifixus — *Ensemble*
Et resurrexit — *Chorus*
Et in spiritum sanctum — *Ken Munsey*
Sanctus — *Chorus*
Osanna — *Chorus*
Benedictus — *Chiho Kaneko*
Agnus Dei — *Bridget Peters*
Dona nobis pacem — *Chorus*

From the Director

Revered by many as the greatest choral masterpiece ever written, the Mass in B Minor is seldom performed by other than professional and university choral groups. Over a year ago, Bel Canto members decided that they would like to study and perform a major work, one that would be exceptionally challenging. With Bach's B Minor Mass, which holds a special place in my heart, they found that challenge.

As a small (but very talented and dedicated) community choral group with limited resources, we have taken some liberties. We are using a few women tenors and less than a full orchestra. One section, "Confiteor unum baptisma," has been cut. Orchestral instruments are modern rather than period, and pianist Matthew Wiencke will play from the full score. One tenor solo will be sung by soprano Chiho Kaneko. I suspect that Herr Bach sometimes had to compromise and I ask that purists be kind. I also suspect that, had he had a magnificent grand piano and such a player as Matt, Bach might have found a way to use them.

In keeping with Bel Canto Chamber Singers' unique tradition, all soloists come from within the group.

In the two hours that we are gathered today, I hope that performers and audience may transcend the mundane cares of our daily lives and be enveloped and transformed by this sublimely beautiful and spiritual work.

— Hal Sheeler

Conductor Herbert Blomstedt on the Mass in B minor

A legacy

The Mass in B Minor IS Bach. More than with any other work by him, you can say that this is the complete Bach. Of course, you could also take the Art of the Fugue, or the Clavier-Übung, or The Well-Tempered Clavier, but none of his other works is as all-embracing, as varied and as stylistically diverse as the B minor Mass, not even the great Passions, wonderful though they are. That's why one can say that Bach brought his whole experience to the B minor Mass, which was written over a very long period. It's his legacy. The oldest movements date from the 1720s, while the last movement to be written, the "Et Incarnatus," was written in 1749, only a few months before his death. Stylistically, it ranges from the

Piano: Matthew Wiencke **Violin:** Judith Wild, Barbara Chase, Paul Ruscak, Mary Lou Schaefer
Viola: Julie Dougal, Edward Doughtie, **Cello:** Margaret Gilmore, Erika Smith **Flute:** Da-Shih Hu, Anne Cragin
Oboe: Virginia Poole, Pam Whitfield **Bassoon:** Earl North, Aileen Sullivan **Trumpet:** Fred Holmgren
Timpani: Norm McMullen