

## *Celebrate Cerddorion's 20th Anniversary Season!*

In March 2015, we will mark our 20th anniversary with a special concert featuring highlights from the works commissioned by Cerddorion through the group's history. The season will conclude with a program in early June of settings of texts from The Song of Songs, including the winners of our fourth Emerging Composers Competition. Please join us!

Be sure to check [www.Cerddorion.org](http://www.Cerddorion.org) for up-to-date information about these future performances!



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# CERDDORION

## VOCAL ENSEMBLE

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*James John*

*Artistic Director*

PRESENTS

# *Models of Inspiration*



Friday, November 14, 2014, 8 pm

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

199 Carroll Street, Brooklyn

Sunday, November 16, 2014, 3pm

St. Ignatius of Antioch

87th Street & West End Avenue, Manhattan

# THE PROGRAM

*Mon coeur se recommande à vous*

Orlando di Lasso (1530–1594)

Missa super *Mon coeur se recommande à vous*

Johannes Eccard (1553–1611)

Kyrie

Gloria

Credo

Jennifer Oates, soprano; Anna Eva Hallin, alto; Ralph Bonheim, tenor

Sanctus

Anna Harmon, soprano; Jeanette Rodriguez, soprano;  
Myrna Nachman, alto; Christopher Ryan, tenor

Agnus Dei

*Please Please Me*

*Lennon-McCartney, arr. Michael Plant (b. 1969)*

*Beatles Motet "Please Please Me"*

(adapted from Lennon-McCartney)

Richard Boukas (b. 1953)

Ben Arendsen, Frank Kamai, Michael Klitsch, tenors

❖❖❖ *Intermission* ❖❖❖

*Jesu, meine Freude (BWV 227)*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

1. Jesu, meine Freude

2. Es ist nun nichts Verdammliches

3. Unter deinem Schirmen

4. Denn das Gesetz des Geistes

Jennifer Oates, Rebecca Schwartz, Merrin Lazyan, soprano 1;  
Anna Harmon, Jeanette Rodriguez, Ellen Schorr, soprano 2;  
Clare Detko, Anna Eva Hallin, Linnea Johnson, alto

5. Trotz dem alten Drachen

6. Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich

7. Weg mit allen Schätzen!

8. So aber Christus in euch ist

Jamie Carrillo, Cathy Markoff, Leonore Nelson, alto  
Ben Arendsen, Ralph Bonheim, Christopher Ryan, tenor  
Steven Iger, Jonathan Miller, Michael Plant, bass

9. Gute Nacht, O Wesen

10. So nun der Geist

11. Weicht, ihr Trauergeister

*Guest Artists*

Masayuki Maki, Organ

Carlene Stober, Cello



# CERDDORION

Sopranos	Altos	Tenors	Basses
Judith Cobb	Jamie Carrillo	Ben Arendsen	Peter Cobb
Anna Harmon	Clare Detko	Ralph Bonheim	Steven Iger
Merrin Lazyan	Anna Eva Hallin	Frank Kamai	Jonathan Miller
Jennifer Oates	Linnea Johnson	Michael Klitsch	Michael Plant
Jeanette Rodriguez	Cathy Markoff	Christopher Ryan	Dean Rainey
Ellen Schorr	Myrna Nachman		Tom Reingold
Rebecca Schwartz	Leonore Nelson		Larry Sutter
	Gretta Wren		



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The members of Cerddorion are grateful to James Kennerley and the Church of Saint Ignatius of Antioch for providing rehearsal and performance space for this season.

Thanks to Vince Peterson and St. Paul's Episcopal Church for providing a performance space for this season.

Thanks to Cathy Markoff for her publicity efforts.

Thanks to Michael Plant for his wonderful arrangement of *Please Please Me*.

### PROGRAM CREDITS:

Michael Klitsch assembled and edited the program, compiled the texts, and handled printing.

Richard Boukas provided notes on his composition; James John provided notes on the other pieces, as well as the Note from the Artistic Director.



## THE ARTISTS

Now in its twentieth season, **CERDDORION** (the name, pronounced *kehr-DOHR-ee-on*, is Welsh for "Musicians") is one of New York's most highly regarded volunteer choral ensembles. A chamber group of up to twenty-eight mixed voices, it is known for its eclectic repertoire, encompassing music from the Renaissance to the contemporary. Audiences have come to appreciate the group's interpretive depth and technical excellence in many styles. Cerddorion has also frequently commissioned new works by such composers as Paul Moravec, David Schober, Lisa Bielawa, David Lang, Elliot Z. Levine, Robert Dennis, and Julie Dolphin.

Besides presenting its own varied programs, Cerddorion is frequently invited to perform with other acclaimed artists. In 2011, the men of Cerddorion sang with esteemed French organist Francis Chapelet in the second inaugural recital of the Manton Memorial Organ at the Church of the Ascension in New York; they were invited back in 2014 to perform in Chapelet's farewell concert. Past collaborations have included the North American premiere of Sir John Tavener's all-night vigil, *The Veil of the Temple*, performed at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall (with Dessoff Choral Consortium and choristers from London's Temple Church); several appearances with the Christopher Caines Dance Company; Baroque opera performances with the early music instrumental ensemble Concert Royal; and serving as the resident teaching ensemble for the Dennis Keene Choral Festival in Kent, Connecticut.

In 2006, Cerddorion performed at the Eastern Divisional Convention of the American Choral Directors Association the works they had commissioned from three New York composers for their tenth anniversary season. September 2007 marked the release on the Tzadik label of *A Handful of World*, Cerddorion's first commercial recording. The CD is dedicated to vocal works by New York composer Lisa Bielawa and includes Cerddorion's performance of Lisa Bielawa's *Lamentations for a City*, which was commissioned and first performed by Cerddorion in 2004.

Cerddorion is a proud member of the New York Choral Consortium.



**JAMES JOHN** is in his fifth season as Artistic Director of the Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble. He is also Associate Professor and Director of Choral Activities at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College-CUNY, where he conducts the Queens College Choir, Vocal Ensemble and Choral Society, teaches choral conducting, and serves as advisor to the graduate program in vocal performance. Recent professional highlights include guest conducting the Tokyo Oratorio Society in a performance of Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem* in Tokyo's Suntory Hall, and an invited performance by the Queens College Choir at the 2012 Eastern Division Conference of the American Choral Directors Association in Providence, Rhode Island.

Under Dr. John's leadership the choral program at the Aaron Copland School of Music has become recognized as one of the finest collegiate choral programs in the region. Past performances with the School of Music's choral ensembles include Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, award-winning productions of Argento's *Postcard from Morocco* and Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*,



Requiems by Mozart and Verdi, "A Night at the Opera" with Queens College alumna Erika Sunnegårdh of the Metropolitan Opera, Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, and world premieres of works by Sidney Boquiren, Leo Kraft, Meg Collins Stoop and others. His choirs have performed in many of New York's prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Weill Recital Hall, St. Patrick's Cathedral and Trinity Church Wall Street. Under his direction the Queens College Vocal Ensemble recently released its first CD, featuring premiere recordings of partsongs by Scottish composer Hamish MacCunn, and the Queens College Choir recorded Bright Sheng's *Two Folksongs from Qinghai*, soon to be released on the Naxos label.

Dr. John's guest conducting appearances include Avery Fisher Hall's annual Messiah Sing-In, a concert of American choral music with the Virginia Chorale (Virginia's only professional choral ensemble), chorus master for the Queens Symphony, regional honor choirs throughout New York State, and a recording with jazz trumpeter Michael Mossman. He has given presentations at both divisional and national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, and is in demand as a clinician and adjudicator throughout the United States. In Fall 2013, Dr. John returned to Tokyo to conduct Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*.

As a teacher and scholar, Dr. John has served as Guest Lecturer in conducting at the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany, and presented seminars on American choral music in Basel and Stockholm. His dissertation on Brahms's *Nänie*, Op. 82, won the Julius Herford Prize from the American Choral Directors Association and will be published soon in revised form as a book by The Edwin Mellen Press. His articles have appeared in *Choral Journal*, *American Choral Review*, and Chorus America's *Research Memorandum Series*. In July 2011 he was appointed Editor of *American Choral Review*, and also serves as a member of ACDA's National Research and Publications Committee.

Dr. John received his Doctor of Musical Arts in Conducting from the Eastman School of Music. Prior to his current position at the Aaron Copland School of Music he served as Director of Choral Activities at Tufts University in Boston, Director of Choral Activities at Nassau Community College in Garden City, NY, and as Dartmouth College's first Conducting Fellow. He received his Master of Arts in Conducting from the Aaron Copland School of Music.



## Guest Artists

### Masayuki Maki, Organ

Masayuki Maki, a multi-instrumentalist on various classical keyboard instruments, has extensive experience in lecturing and performing in America and Asia. He was formerly Associate Instructor of harpsichord performance and keyboard accompaniment at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University and is now adjunct faculty at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College of the City University of New York, teaching harpsichord, organ, fortepiano, and chamber music. He tours regularly in Japan, China, and the United States, giving performances and master classes together with recorder artist Eva Legêne. He has also been an artist of Poly Theatre Group and artist-in-residence at Peking University (2008, 2009, and 2010) and the Gulangyu Music Festival (2008 and 2010–2011). His international activities have been sponsored by the Asahi Shimbun Foundation and covered by China Radio International, Asahi Newspaper, Mainichi Newspaper, and *Early Music America* magazine.

Other than performing, he also works at the Metropolitan Opera, Trinity Wall Street, Carnegie Hall, and Lincoln Center as harpsichord and organ technician. He graduated from Musashino Academia Musicae in Tokyo, the Early Music Institute at Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, and Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, and he is currently an Advanced Candidate for his doctorate in harpsichord at Stony Brook University. He is also a faculty member and an assistant to the artistic director of summer workshops "Rethinking Bach" at Aaron Copland School of Music and Tokai University.

### Carlene Stober, Cello

Carlene Stober has performed as continuo cellist for Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity for many years, and she is a member of Empire Viols and The Grenser Trio. In addition to performing with many ensembles, she has appeared on *A Prairie Home Companion*, was featured musician in Theatre for a New Audience's production of *Pericles* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and has performed with the Utah Shakespeare Festival. Carlene is a member of the Saratoga Opera Festival Orchestra and has performed at the Manitou Chamber Music Festival in Colorado. She served as principal cellist of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra and performed throughout the United States as a member of the Delphi String Quartet. Carlene holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music.



## Program Notes and Texts

# *Models of Inspiration*

### *A note from the Artistic Director:*

In 1990 I was singing in the small paid choir at St. Ignatius of Antioch on the Upper West Side. At that time, a countertenor named Richard Boukas was subbing periodically, and he impressed me as an exceptionally fine musician. Somehow I heard that he had recently composed a number of “Beatles Motets,” which piqued my interest. Shortly after that, I ended up leaving New York City, and though I never actually saw any of the Beatles scores, the concept stuck vividly in my mind. After a long hiatus, I returned to New York, and I started wondering whatever happened to Richard. I searched online, but couldn’t find anything. One day while swimming over at Queens College, I was getting ready to leave the pool, and a head popped out of the water. There was sudden and instant recognition: “Richard!” “Jim!” “Beatles Motets!!” And the seeds of a concert program were born... That was in 2006, and needless to say, our performances this weekend of the *Beatles Motet “Please Please Me”* are the culmination of an idea begun many years ago.

One of the joys of putting this program together has been the opportunity to pair Richard’s work with Bach’s *Jesu, meine Freude*, the central fugue of which (“Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich”) serves as the primary inspiration for his third movement. Musicians throughout history have used popular music as the basis for new compositions. Boukas took Lennon-McCartney as his starting point; Bach based *Jesu, meine Freude* on a Lutheran chorale by Johann Crüger; Johannes Eccard modeled a mass setting on the well-known secular chanson *Mon coeur se recommande à vous*, by Orlando di Lasso—which is where our program begins. Hence the title, *Models of Inspiration*.

### **Orlando di Lasso, *Mon coeur se recommande à vous***

### **Johannes Eccard, *Missa super Mon coeur se recommande à vous***

Along with Palestrina, Victoria, and Byrd, Orlando di Lasso (1530–1594) was one of the most famous and influential composers of the sixteenth century. He was extraordinarily prolific, with an oeuvre encompassing some five hundred motets, fifty masses, one hundred magnificat settings, ninety German lieder, and three hundred madrigals and chansons. Born in Mons (now part of southern Belgium), his formative years were spent in Italy, and from 1556 onward he served as *maestro di cappella* at the Bavarian court. Lasso’s five-voice setting of *Mon coeur se recommande à vous*, a poem by the well-known Clément Marot (1496–1544), was published in the late 1560s. It should not be confused with the far more popular four-voice setting of the same text, which appeared in the anthology *The A Cappella Singer* around 1900, attributed to Lasso but of dubious origin.

The poem itself is a mildly bitter reproach by a rejected lover. Among its most poignant lines are “My mouth, which used to smile upon you and speak gentle words, does nothing now but curse those who have banished me from your sight”—implying that the person to whom the poem is directed has given their affections to someone else. Lasso’s setting avoids overt word painting (with the possible exception of the dance-like syncopations highlighting the phrase “speak gentle words”) and is more melancholy than outwardly spiteful, using subtle modal shifts to capture the poet’s anguish with courtly restraint.

It is precisely this subtlety and restraint, along with Lasso’s exquisitely crafted counterpoint, that may have made the piece ripe for reworking into another genre. *Missa super Mon coeur se recommande à vous* by Johannes Eccard (1553–1611), a pupil of Lasso, is a parody mass based on the chanson. The term “parody” in this instance is really a misnomer (there is no satire here), but rather describes a technique common in the sixteenth century for constructing a mass on the contrapuntal framework of a preexistent chanson, madrigal, or motet. Lasso himself frequently “parodied” his own works, and in fact this particular mass was for a long time misattributed to him. Scholars now believe Eccard composed it around 1579, only a few years after finishing his studies with Lasso in Munich, suggesting a possible homage to his former teacher.

It is not difficult to hear the relationship between chanson and mass, especially at the beginning of the Kyrie, Gloria, and Credo, which remain quite faithful to the opening of the original (as is usually the case with parody technique). The start of the Sanctus, with its elegant linear motion and devotional mood, departs furthest from its model—capturing a distinctly sacred moment in the liturgy (the elevation of the host) by introducing essentially new material. The Benedictus and Hosanna mark a clear return to motives derived from the chanson, and the brief Agnus Dei stems almost entirely from the chanson’s first point of imitation.

### *Mon coeur se recommande à vous*

Mon coeur se recommande à vous,  
Tout plein d’ennui et de martyre;  
Au moins en dépit des jaloux  
Faites qu’adieu vous puisse dire!  
Ma bouche qui savait sourire  
Et conter propos gracieux  
Ne fait maintenant que maudire  
Ceux qui m’ont banni de vos yeux.

My heart commends itself to you,  
Filled with much pain and anguish;  
At least, in spite of those who are jealous,  
Allow me to bid you goodbye.  
My mouth, which used to smile upon you  
And speak gentle words,  
Does nothing now but curse  
Those who have banished me from your sight.

*Missa super Mon coeur se recommande à vous*

**Kyrie**

Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.

**Gloria**

Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.  
Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.  
Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.  
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam  
tuam.

Glory to God in the highest,  
and, peace to his people on earth.  
We praise you, we bless you,  
we worship you, we glorify you,  
we give thanks to you for your great glory.

Domine Deus, Rex caelestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens.  
Domine Fili unigenite, Iesu Christe.  
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.

O Lord God, heavenly King,  
God the Father Almighty.  
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;  
O Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father,

Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem nostram.

Who takes away the sins of the world, have  
mercy upon us.  
Who takes away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
miserere nobis.  
Quoniam tu solus Sanctus.  
Tu solus Dominus.  
Tu solus Altissimus, Iesu Christe.  
Cum Sancto Spiritu,  
In gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**Credo**

Credo in unum Deum.  
Patrem omnipotentem,  
factorem caeli et terrae,  
visibilium omnium et invisibilium.  
Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,  
Filium Dei unigenitum,  
Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.  
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,  
Deum verum de Deo vero.  
Genitum, non factum,  
consubstantiali Patri:  
per quem omnia facta sunt.  
Qui propter nos homines  
et propter nostram salutem  
descendit de caelis.

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto  
ex Maria Virgine: Et homo factus est.

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato:  
passus, et sepultus est.

Et resurrexit tertia die,  
secundum scripturas.  
Et ascendit in caelum:  
sedet ad dexteram Patris.  
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria  
judicare vivos et mortuos:  
Cujus regni non erit finis.

Et in Spiritum sanctum  
Dominum, et vivificantem:  
Qui ex Patre, Filioque procedit.  
Qui cum Patre, et Filio simul  
adoratur, et conglorificatur:  
Qui locutus est per Prophetas.

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth,  
and of all things visible and invisible.  
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
Only begotten Son of God,  
Begotten of his Father before all worlds.  
God of God, light of light,  
Very God of very God.  
Begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father:  
by whom all things were made.  
Who for us men  
and for our salvation  
came down from heaven.

And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost  
of the Virgin Mary: And was made man.

And was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate:  
suffered, and was buried.

And the third day He rose again  
according to the scriptures.  
And ascended into heaven,  
and sits at the right hand of the Father  
And He shall come again with glory  
to judge the living and the dead:  
His kingdom shall have no end.

And (I believe in) the Holy Ghost,  
the Lord and giver of life:  
Who proceeds from the Father and Son.  
Who with the Father and Son together  
is worshipped and glorified:  
Who spoke by the Prophets.



Et unam sanctam catholicam  
et apostolicam Ecclesiam.  
Confiteor unum baptisma  
in remissionem peccatorum.  
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum  
Et vitam venturi saeculi.  
Amen.

### ***Sanctus***

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.  
Osanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit  
in nomine Domini.  
Osanna in excelsis.

### ***Agnus Dei***

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
dona nobis pacem.

And in one holy catholic  
and apostolic church.  
I acknowledge one baptism  
for the remission of sins.  
And I look for the resurrection of the dead  
And the life of the world to come.  
Amen.

Holy, holy, holy  
Lord God of Hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the  
world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the  
world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the  
world, grant us peace.

## **Please Please Me**

Last night I said these words to my girl  
I know you never even try, girl  
C'mon, please please me, whoa yeah, like I please you.

You don't need me to show the way, love  
Why do I always have to say "love"  
C'mon, please please me, whoa yeah, like I please you.

I don't wanna sound complaining  
But you know there's always rain in my heart.  
I do all the pleasing with you, it's so hard to reason  
With you, whoah yeah, why do you make me blue?

Last night I said these words to my girl.  
I know you never even try, girl.  
C'mon, please please me, whoa yeah, like I please you.



**RICHARD BOUKAS**, a prolific composer, guitarist, vocalist, and educator, is notably regarded as an expert and purveyor of Brazilian music in its diverse forms. Alongside his acclaimed work in Brazilian jazz and chamber music, Boukas has been a professional choral singer and composer for four decades. His twenty "Beatles Motets" are choral transformations ranging from Tallis and Monteverdi to Bach and Brahms. Most recently, he arranged Brazilian popular classics by Nazareth, Sérgio Santos, Guinga, and Radamés Gnattali for the Queens College Vocal Ensemble under the direction of Dr. James John. They were premiered during the "Year of Brazil" at Queens College.

Boukas received his M.A. in composition from Queens College/Aaron Copland School of Music. His chamber commissions include La Catrina String Quartet, PUBLIQuartet, Berklee World String Ensemble, Lamont Saxophone Quartet, Modern Mandolin Quartet, and Atlantic Brass Quintet. He is composer-leader of Brazilian jazz ensembles Quarteto Moderno, Trio Brasileiro, co-leader of Novosel-Boukas Duo, and a frequent solo recitalist. Recordings include "Balaio," "Live at St. Michael's," "Tudo de Bom," "Amazôna," and "Embarcadero." A faculty member at the New School University Jazz and Contemporary Music Program since 1995 (receiving the Distinguished University Teaching Award in 2010) and formerly of Mannes College (1989–1995), he is an itinerant guest artist-in-residence at numerous universities in North America and Brazil. For more information, visit [boukas.com](http://boukas.com).

PROGRAM NOTES

My choral works that have become known as the *Beatles Motets* were written mainly between 1988 and 1993. Having sung choral literature from Dufay to Penderecki and being a child of the 1960s, the marriage of The Beatles with five centuries of polyphonic choral traditions seemed so natural to me. These pieces were not commissioned, but were written out of love for singing masterpieces with people. Dr. James John has been a colleague dating to the 1980s, when we sang together at St. Ignatius Church, so he has known about these pieces since their inception. We have waited years for the right situation to present them, and this to my joy is now a reality with Cerddorion.

The motet based on “Please Please Me” is in three movements. The style is intended to be “channeled Bach.” The first movement moves from a chorale fantasia to episodes leaning toward Monteverdi and Schütz. The second movement (in 12/8 meter, reminiscent of the opening of Cantata No. 1 (“Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern”) is all new musical material, only using the final line of the Beatles lyric. The final movement melds the Beatles melody with the fugue subject “Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich” from *Jesu, Meine Freude*. It is thus both clever and appropriate to program this Beatles motet with the most profound of Bach’s motets. I am deeply grateful to Dr. John and Cerddorion for the meticulous work and musicality they have invested in this piece. Although I missed the fiftieth anniversary of The Beatles’ arrival in 1964, I hope the entire collection of Beatles Motets can be definitively performed and recorded in the near future.

—Richard Boukas

“Please Please Me” Cantata

Last night I said these words to my love,  
You never tried, you know you never even tried, girl.  
Come on, please please me like I please you.  
You don’t need me to show the way, love.  
Come on, please please me like I please you.  
I don’t wanna sound complainin’  
But you know there’s always rain in my heart.  
I do all the pleasin’ with you,  
It’s so hard to reason with you.  
Why do you make me blue?

And when I said these words to my love,  
There was silence all around.  
Ach, she didn’t even try to listen.  
I looked at her und sprach:  
Please please me like I please you.

J.S. Bach, *Jesu, meine Freude*, BWV 227

Only five motets by J.S. Bach (1685–1750) are of undisputed authenticity, and none are linked to the rigorous weekly schedule of the church year for which Bach wrote more than two hundred cantatas as Cantor of the Thomasschule in Leipzig—his final and most noteworthy appointment, held from 1723 onward. Bach’s motets were composed for special occasions (primarily funerals or memorial services), and aside from being far fewer in number than the cantatas, they are also purely choral, containing no solo arias, recitatives, or obbligato instruments, and requiring no orchestral forces. A set of instrumental parts that double the vocal lines survives for one of the motets (*Der Geist hilft unsrer Schwachheit auf*/The Spirit Helps Our Weakness, BWV 226), but no such materials exist for any of the others, prompting speculation as to how they were performed: *a cappella* or with instrumental accompaniment. Our performance of *Jesu, meine Freude* adds *basso continuo* (organ and cello) as a foundation, striking a middle ground between complete doubling of the vocal parts and no use of instruments at all.

Bach’s motivation for composing *Jesu, meine Freude* is unclear. He may have written it in 1723 for a memorial service for Joanna Maria Kees, widow of Leipzig’s postmaster—the sermon for the occasion was based on Romans 8: 11, which is the text of the final movement. *Jesu, meine Freude* is also unique among Bach’s motets for its length (eleven movements) and five-part voicing (SSATB)—the others are for double choir. The work takes its name from the Lutheran chorale by Johann Crüger (1650; words by Johann Franck) that serves as a cantus firmus throughout, alternating with stanzas from Romans 8:1–11 to create a large arch form:

1. Chorale, verse 1
2. Romans 8:1, 4b
3. Chorale, verse 2
4. Romans, 8:2 (Trio, SSA)
5. Chorale, verse 3 (chorale fantasia)
6. Romans, 8:9 (double fugue)
7. Chorale, verse 4
8. Romans, 8:10 (Trio ATB)
9. Chorale, verse 5 (chorale fantasia)
10. Romans, 8:11
11. Chorale, verse 6

Movements 1 and 11 are an exact repetition of the same music; movement 10 is a shortened version of movement 2; movements 3, 4, and 5 have the same essential shape as movements 7, 8, and 9 (chorale setting, trio, chorale fantasia); and at the center is a double fugue. A total of 209 measures precede the fugue, and 208 follow it. This ingenious palindromic design has important symbolism. Esoterically, it can be referred to as “chiastic,” from the Greek letter “chi” (X) which is the first letter in the word “Χριστός,” meaning “Christ.” According to the New Oxford American Dictionary, a chiasmus is “a rhetorical or literary figure in which words, grammatical constructions, or concepts are repeated in reverse order, in the same or a modified form.” In this case, each half of the motet hinges around the text of the double fugue, “You, however, are not carnal, but spiritual,” succinctly expressing the central idea of the work: the struggle between flesh and spirit can be overcome through Christ. Music, structure and meaning are so closely intertwined that it is no wonder Albert Schweitzer referred to *Jesu, meine Freude* as Bach’s “sermon upon life and death.”



## Jesu, meine Freude

### 1. Chorale—Johan Franck

Jesu, meine Freude,  
meines Herzens Weide,  
Jesu, meine Zier!  
Ach wie lang, ach lange,  
ist dem Herzen bange  
und verlangt nach dir!  
Gottes Lamm, mein Bräutigam,  
außer dir soll mir auf Erden  
nichts sonst Liebers werden.

### 2. Chorus—Romans 8:1, 4b

Es ist nun nichts Verdammliches  
an denen, die in Christo Jesu sind,  
die nicht nach dem Fleische wandeln,  
sondern nach dem Geist.

### 3. Chorale—Johan Franck

Unter deinen Schirmen  
Bin ich für den Stürmen  
Aller Feinde frei.  
Laß den Satan wittern,  
Laß den Feind erbittern,  
Mir steht Jesus bei.  
Ob es itzt gleich kracht und blitzt,  
Ob gleich Sünd und Hölle schrecken,  
Jesus will mich decken.

### 4. Trio (SSA)—Romans 8:2

Denn das Gesetz des Geistes,  
der da lebendig machet in Christo Jesu,  
hat mich frei gemacht von dem Gesetz  
der Sünde und des Todes.

Jesu, my joy,  
My heart's delight,  
Jesu, my treasure!  
How long, ah, how long,  
My heart is troubled  
And longs for you!  
God's lamb, my bridegroom,  
Besides you, nothing else on earth  
Shall become dearer to me.

There is now nothing condemnable in them  
Who are in Christ Jesus,  
Who walk not according to the flesh,  
But according to the spirit.

Under your protection  
I am free from the storms  
Of all my foes.  
Let Satan curse and swear,  
Let the foe become bitter,  
Jesus stands by me.  
If a storm suddenly crashes and flashes,  
If sin and hell suddenly frighten me,  
Jesus wants to protect me.

For the law of the spirit,  
Which gives life in Christ Jesus,  
Has made me free from the law  
Of sin and death.

### 5. Chorale—Johan Franck

Trotz dem alten Drachen,  
trotz des Todes Rachen,  
trotz der Furcht dazu!  
Tobe, Welt, und springe;  
ich steh hier und singe  
in gar sichrer Ruh.  
Gottes Macht hält mich in acht;  
Erd und Abgrund muß verstummen,  
ob sie noch so brummen.

### 6. Chorus—Romans 8:9

Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich,  
sondern geistlich,  
so anders Gottes Geist in euch wohnt.  
Wer aber Christi Geist nicht hat,  
der ist nicht sein.

### 7. Chorale

Weg mit allen Schätzen!  
du bist mein Ergötzen,  
Jesu, meine Lust!  
Weg, ihr eitlen Ehren,  
ich mag euch nicht hören,  
bleibt mir unbewußt!  
Elend, Not, Kreuz, Schmach und Tod  
soll mich, ob ich viel muß leiden,  
nicht von Jesu scheiden.

### 8. Trio (ATB)—Romans 8:10

So aber Christus in euch ist,  
so ist der Leib zwar tot  
um der Sünde willen;  
der Geist aber ist das Leben  
um der Gerechtigkeit willen.

Despite the old dragon,  
Despite death's jaws,  
And despite fears as well,  
Even though the world might rage and burst,  
I will stand here and sing  
In utterly confident peace!  
God's might holds me in awe;  
Earth and abyss must become silent,  
Even though they still grumble.

You, however, are not carnal,  
But spiritual,  
If indeed God's spirit dwells in you.  
But anyone who does not have Christ's spirit  
Does not belong to him.

Away with all treasures!  
You are my delight,  
Jesu, my pleasure!  
Away, you vain honors,  
I do not want to hear you;  
Remain unknown to me!  
Misery, distress, cross, shame and death  
Shall not, though I must suffer greatly,  
Separate me from Jesu.

But if Christ is in you,  
The body is indeed dead  
Because of sin;  
The spirit, however, is alive  
Because of righteousness.

**9. Chorale**—Johan Franck  
 Gute Nacht, o Wesen,  
 das die Welt erlesen,  
 mir gefälltst du nicht!  
 Gute Nacht, ihr Sünden,  
 bleibet weit dahinten,  
 kommt nicht mehr ans Licht!  
 Gute Nacht, du Stolz und Pracht!  
 Dir sei ganz, du Lasterleben,  
 gute Nacht gegeben!

**10. Chorus**—Romans 8:11  
 So nun der Geist des,  
 der Jesum von den Toten  
 auferwecket hat, in euch wohnt,  
 so wird auch derselbige,  
 der Christum von den Toten  
 auferwecket hat,  
 eure sterblichen Leiber  
 lebendig machen, um des willen,  
 daß sein Geist in euch wohnet.

**11. Chorale**—Johan Franck  
 Weicht, ihr Trauergeister,  
 denn mein Freudenmeister,  
 Jesus, tritt herein.  
 Denen, die Gott lieben,  
 muß auch ihr Betrüben  
 lauter Zucker sein.  
 Duld' ich schon hier Spott und Hohn,  
 dennoch bleibst du auch im Leide,  
 Jesu, meine Freude.

Farewell, O life  
 That the world has chosen;  
 You please me not!  
 Farewell you sins.  
 Stay far behind me;  
 Come no more into the light!  
 Farewell pride and pomp,  
 To you, life of iniquity,  
 A final farewell be bidden.

If the spirit of him  
 Who has raised Jesus from the dead  
 Dwells in you,  
 So will the same one  
 Who has raised Jesus  
 From the dead  
 Bring life to your mortal bodies,  
 Because his spirit  
 Dwells in you.

Give way, you spirits of grief!  
 For my lord of joy,  
 Jesus, enters in.  
 For those who love God,  
 Even their sorrows  
 Must be pure sweetness.  
 Even if I must endure mockery and scorn,  
 You still remain, even in suffering,  
 Jesu, my joy!

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