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BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

Johann Ernst
Johann Bernhard
Johann Lorenz
Johann Friedrich
Heinrich

BACH

ORGAN WORKS

Stefano Molardi *organ*

Bach Family Organ Works

CD1	75'54	Johann Bernhard Bach I
Johann Ernst Bach II 1722–1777		15 'Wir glauben all' an einen Gott' 7'15
Fantasia and Fugue in F		16 'Wir glauben all' an einen Gott'
1 Fantasia	3'35	(2nd version) 6'18
2 Fugue	4'25	17 'Wir glauben all' an einen Gott'
		(3rd version) 5'20
Johann Bernhard Bach I 1676–1749		18 Ciacona in A BWV Anh.83 4'19
3 Ciacona in G BWV Anh.84	8'58	
4 'Jesus nichts als Jesus'	3'15	
'Du Friedefürst, Herr Jesu Christ'		Johann Friedrich Bach I 1682–1730
5 Versus I	1'02	19 Fugue in G minor 2'34
6 Versus II	0'53	Heinrich Bach 1615–1692
7 Versus III	0'54	20 'Da Jesus an dem Kreuze stund' 3'03
8 Versus IV	1'04	
9 Versus V	0'48	Johann Bernhard Bach I
		21 Ciacona in B flat BWV Anh.82 6'37
10 'Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her'	2'25	
11 'Nun freut euch'	3'18	CD2 72'11
12 'Helft mir Gottes, Güte preisen'	3'20	Johann Ernst Bach II 1722–1777
		Fantasia and Fugue in D minor
Johann Lorenz Bach 1695–1773		1 Fantasia 3'19
Prelude and Fugue in D		2 Fugue 3'25
13 Prelude	1'39	
14 Fugue	4'40	

Heinrich Bach 1615–1692		16 'Lobt Gott, ihr Christen allzugleich' BWV <i>deest</i> 4'10
3 'Erbar dich mein'	3'17	17 'Machs mit mir, Gott, nach deiner Güt' BWV <i>deest</i> 3'03
<i>Attribution uncertain</i>		18 'O Gott, du frommer Gott'
Fantasia and Fugue in A minor BWV561		BWV <i>deest</i> 4'51
4 Fantasia	3'05	19 'Wenn ich in Angst und Not'
5 Fugue	7'33	BWV <i>deest</i> 4'53
6 Fugue in C BWV Anh.90	2'48	20 'Wir Christenleut han jetzund Freud' BWV <i>deest</i> 4'21
Partita on 'Wenn wir in höchstens Nöten sein' BWV Anh.78		Partita on 'Herr Christ der einge Gottes Sohn' BWV Anh.77
7 Versus I	0'55	21 Chorale 1'12
8 Versus II	0'48	22 Versus I 3'03
9 Versus III	0'52	23 Versus II 1'23
10 Versus IV	1'29	24 Versus III 1'13
11 Versus V	0'47	25 Versus IV 1'46
12 Versus VI	0'36	26 Versus V 1'20
13 Versus VII	0'52	27 Versus VI 1'59
		28 Versus VII 1'22
14 'Christus, der uns selig macht'	4'20	
BWV747		
15 'Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier'	3'16	
BWV754		

Stefano Molardi
at the Dell'Orto e Lanzini organ (2003),
Chiesa Parrocchiale di S Tomaso, Gesso di Zola Predosa

Towards the end of the 16th century central Germany began to play a leading role in the realm of culture, in particular with regard to music. This was largely thanks to the presence of the Bach dynasty, whose various members through to the great J. S. Bach contributed enormously to the musical development of their country, especially in the Thüringen area. The foremost cities in which the Bach family worked were Gotha, Meiningen, Weimar, Eisenach and Erfurt, where court society embraced and promoted culture, furthered by the liturgical and religious tradition. Religious activity revolved around the Lutheran reform, and from the musical point of view this meant an emphasis on the chorale, a form that was widely used by all the musicians in the area, giving rise to a number of innovative solutions based on the creative use of technique and counterpoint.

The Bach family had always shown great musical aptitude, thanks to the practical experience built up in the course of time by different members of the family and passed down from one generation to the next: fathers, brothers and uncles helped the younger members of the clan acquire musical expertise that was unmistakable, almost a family “trademark” that prevailed throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. J. Sebastian Bach himself learnt as an apprentice under his father, who was employed at the time by the city of Eisenach as a *Stadtppfeifer*. Following his father’s death, J. Sebastian continued his studies at the house of his brother, J. Christoph, in Ohrdruf, and also absorbed all he could from two eminent uncles, J. Michael and J. Christoph, who were points of reference in Thüringen in the second half of the 1600s.

This CD set presents the keyboard works of the most important members of the Bach family during the 1600s and 1700s.

Heinrich Bach (1615-1692) was J. Sebastian’s great uncle and the father of J. Christoph and J. Michael (whose complete works were released by Brilliant Classics 95418 in 2017). Heinrich was one of the first important musicians to make a name for himself in central Germany. He was municipal musician in Schweinfurt, then in Erfurt, and later organist in Arnstadt. Two organ chorales are attributed to him:

Erarm dich mein (contained in a manuscript by J. G. Walther and marked with the initials HB) and *Da Jesu an dem Kreuze stund*, similar in the strictness of the counterpoint, but also highly expressive.

Johann Bernhard Bach (1676-1749) was J. Sebastian’s second cousin. Born in Erfurt, as a musician he was one of the most important and refined members of the family. He trained under his father, J. Aegidius, becoming organist in Erfurt and later in Eisenach, where he died. Only instrumental works and a number of pieces for the organ have come down to us, revealing his gift for melody and compositional skill, both in the chorales, and in particular in the three Chaconnes, two of which were once attributed to J. Sebastian (BWV Anh. 83 and 84).

Johann Ernst Bach (1722-1777), the son of J. Bernhard, was born in Eisenach and studied with J. Sebastian when in 1737 he moved to Leipzig to attend the Thomasschule, later returning to Eisenach to aid and ultimately replace his father in the post of organist. He wrote a number of vocal works (Motets and Cantatas) as well as instrumental compositions. The two Fantasias for organ included in this recording bear witness to the influence of J. Sebastian. The counterpoint is sophisticated, elegant and melodious (in the fugues), and there is plenty of creativity in the fantasias, with a more interiorized take on the galant style typical of C. Philipp Emanuel and W. Friedemann, the sons of J.S. He was in close contact with C. Philipp Emanuel, and became chapel master in Weimar.

Johann Lorenz Bach (1695-1773), the son of J. Valentin (first cousin of J.S.), studied with J. Sebastian between 1715 and 1717 in Weimar, and was later employed as organist in Lahm im Itzgrund, where he died. The only works to have come down to us are a prelude in D major, preserved in a manuscript kept in the Lahm im Itzgrund parish archive, and a fugue in D major. The brilliant fluency of the style clearly reveals the influence of J.S.

Johann Friedrich Bach (1682-1730), the son of J. Christoph (and hence grandson of Heinrich) was much the same age as J.S., and both were born in Eisenach. In fact J. Friedrich took over as organist when Sebastian moved to the Weimar court. The only

surviving piece attributable to J. Friedrich is a fugue in G minor kept in Berlin (mus. ms. Bach P 384) which clearly reveals the influence of J. Sebastian.

Starting from track 4 of the second CD, we have a collection of pieces that most probably derive from the Bach area, but with no certain attribution. Although the *Fantasia and Fugue in A minor* BWV 561 embodies stylistic elements that were common in Thüringen and were frequently used by the extended Bach family, it has often been attributed to Buttstedt, and is unlikely to have been by J. Sebastian. The other pieces are for the most part trios on chorales, fantasias on chorales and partitas. Some of them are distinctly reminiscent of J. Sebastian's style, so they could perhaps be by members of his family and date back to the first half of the 1700s, or by his sons, or indeed by some prominent pupil of his.

According to historical accounts, essential ingredients for performance were the arts of improvisation and ornamentation. The former concerned not only the ad-lib insertion of episodes and cadenzas within the composition, but also the extemporaneous addition of the basso continuo and cadenzas (for example, the *tirate* and arpeggios in the prelude by J. Lorenz). As for ornamentation, it regarded the addition of embellishments on the notes (trills, grace notes, etc.), as well as “diminutions”, in other words breaking the notes of a given voice down into shorter values, usually in the slow movements and in the repetitions. Many Renaissance and later treatises, including those by Ganassi, Conforti, Diruta, Tartini and C. Ph. E. Bach, provide a wide range of possible examples of this practice. On the subject of ornamentation, it should be recalled that many 17th and 18th century sources suggest that the scores should be considerably enriched, possibly because they were generally printed without such embellishments. The following are a few examples of this conviction:

«...to play without trills... is thoroughly insipid...» G. G. Kapsberger, Libro Quarto d'Intavolatura di Chitarrone, Rome, 1640;

«...if the music is largely or entirely devoid of ornamentation it needs to be enriched... leaving just a few notes without embellishment from time to time...» F. Correa de Arauxo, Facultad Organica, Alcalà, 1626;

«...As for the Manner, everything should be entrusted to the decision of the Virtuoso, how he plays in relation to the Adagio or Allegro cadenzas, since this depends on his inclination, and the mood of someone desirous of his own satisfaction, and of enticing the listener at the same time...», J. Krieger, Musicalische Partien, Nuremberg, 1697.

During the period in question, a piece of music was considered a “Discourse” that gave expression to the “*affetti*”, or passions. What follows are a number of select passages from *Clavierschule* (Leipzig, 1789), the treatise by Daniel Gottlob Türk:

«...Essential and extemporaneous ornaments are a decisive part of all good performance. To add to which there should also be: fine sound, free and easy playing, appropriate expression and other equally important resources...»

«...to play without the constraints of measure is necessary in the free fantasias, cadenza, stops and so on and in the ‘recitative’ passages. In all these cases the performer’s own feelings are more important than the tempo. Today certain of these passages are also found in sonatas, concerto and similar forms...»

«...In vehement, furious passages, the strongest notes can be played at greater speed. Certain ideas that are repeated with growing intensity (generally in the high register) may also call for greater speed...»

«...rubato is the third resource at the performer’s disposal. It is usually considered as a way of shortening, lengthening or moving the notes with respect to the bass;... the bass notes continue in the established tempo and only the notes of the melody line are staggered.»

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Translation by Kate Singleton

ORGAN SPECIFICATIONS

Organ by Dell'Orto and Lanzini, 2003

Instrument built on the G. Silbermann model of 1735-38 in the Stadtkirche in Frauenstein.

Two manuals with 51 notes (C1-D5)
Pedalboard with 27 pedals (C1-D3)
Pressure 60 mm
Temperament: Werckmeister III

Grand'Organo

Principale 8'
Flauto a camino 8'
Quintadena 8'
Ottava 4'
Flauto a cuspidi 4'
Quinta 2' 2/3
Ottava 2'
Mistura IV
Cornetto III

Organo positivo

Bordone 8'
Principale 4'
Flauto a camino 4'
Nazardo 2' 2/3
Ottava 2'
Terza 1' 3/5
quinta 1' 1/3
Flagioletto 1'
Cimbalo II

Pedal

Subbasso 16'
Ottava 8'
Trombone 16'

Unione tastiere
Unione I-Pedale
Tremolo a vento perso

Born in Cremona, **Stefano Molardi** is an organist, musicologist, harpsichordist and conductor who trained under eminent musicians such as E. Viccardi, D. Costantini, E. Kooiman, C. Stemberge, H. Vogel, L.F. Tagliavini and in particular Michael Radulescu, with whom he took a Masters Degree at the *Hochschule für Musik* (now the *Musikuniversität*) in Vienna, and with whom he plays basso continuo in the *Académie Bach* at Porrentruy in Switzerland.



Winner of numerous national and international organ competitions, including the Pasion in Prato (Udine) in 1998, Viterbo (1996), Burges and the Paul Hofhaimer in Innsbruck, his intense concert schedule as a soloist and member of chamber ensembles involves him in tours of Italy, other European countries, Brazil and the USA. He has played at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, the Sao Paulo Hall in Brazil, the Musikverein in Vienna, the Carnegie Hall in New York, the Jordan Hall in Boston, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Teatro la Fenice in Venice, etc.

As an organist he is regularly invited to play in concerts and hold master classes in important festivals in Italy, Europe, the USA and Japan. In 2009 he played the complete organ works by Franz Liszt and Cesar Franck in Lugano.

He is tenured organ professor at the Lugano Conservatoire in Switzerland and at the Trapani Conservatoire.

He has recorded for the Tactus, Christophorus and Deutsch Grammonphon labels. From 2003 to 2010 for the Swiss label Divox he recorded 4 CDs devoted to solo organ music by Claudio Merulo and others in which he conducted the *Virtuosi*

delle Muse baroque orchestra. He directed this latter ensemble from 2005 to 2013, meeting with great critical acclaim in magazines such as *Amadeus*, *Early Music* and *Crescendo*, and receiving many important international accolades, including a 5 Diapason rating from the French review of the same name, 5 stars from Goldberg, 5 stars and CD of the month from Amadeus. His performances have been broadcast by SWR in Germany, Mezzo in France, Radio France, Radio Suisse Romande.

He has conducted various instrumental and vocal concerts in Italy, Hungary, France, Germany, Austria, Spain and the USA, with performances of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* (Ferrara, church of S. Cristoforo alla Certosa), Bach's *St. John Passion* and the *Magnificat* (Ferrara), the Mozart *Requiem* (Festival dell'Aurora, Crotona), the opera *Ademira* composed by Lucchesi in 1784 (Teatro Dovizi, Bibbiena), *Mitridate* composed by Porpora 1730-36 (Teatro Caldéron, Valladolid), Vivaldi's *Il Farnace* and *Il Giustino* (Theater an der Wien, Vienna, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris), as well as concerts in Bilbao, Oldeburg, Rheingau, Cremona (Monteverdi Festival), Paris, Nantes, Munich, Innsbruck, London, Montpellier, Schwetzingen, Dachau, Miami, Istanbul, Valencia, etc.

Since 2013 he has directed the Accademia Barocca Italiana, which follows on from the Virtuosi delle Muse.

In 2013 he recorded J. S. Bach's complete organ works in 15 CDs for Brilliant Classics, winning important international accolades such as 5 stars in the review *Musica* and in the BBC Music Magazine in London. In 2015, for the same label he recorded the complete works for the organ by J. Kuhnau, and in 2017 the complete organ works by J. Michael Bach and J. Christoph Bach, receiving for both recordings the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik in Germany.

In September 2017 he conducted the Accademia Barocca Italiana and internationally acclaimed soloists in a performance of Monteverdi's *Vespro della Beata Vergine* at Bellelay Abbey near Berne, broadcast by Radio Suisse Romande.

Thanks to:

Birgit Busse - Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz,
Antonio Delfino, Felix Friedrich, don Albino Bardellini,
Karin Sidow-Universität der Künste Berlin

Recording: 5-6 April 2018, Chiesa Parrocchiale di S Tomaso, Gesso di Zola Predosa, Bologna, Italy
Sound engineer, Direction, Editing: Simone Bellucci
Cover: Ebersmunster Abbey, France. Photograph by Valentin R.
Artist photo: by Michele Branca
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