



Bach and Zelenka

Ad Astra Consort
Alex Underwood, conductor

Ad Astra Music Festival

JULY 18 ~ AUGUST 2
2015
*Russell,
Kansas*

This concert was underwritten by the City of Russell

Bach and Zelenka

Ad Astra Consort

Alex Underwood, conductor

Trinity United Methodist Church

Sunday, July 26th, 2pm

PROGRAM

Johann Sebastian Bach

“Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir,” BWV 131

Sinfonia & Chorus: Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir

Arioso & Chorus: So du willst, Herr, Sünde zurechnen

Chorus: Ich harre des Herrn, meine Seele harret

Aria and Chorale: Meine Seele wartet auf den Herrn von einer Morgenwache

Chorus: Israel hoffe auf den Herrn; denn bei dem Herrn

INTERMISSION

Jan Dismas Zelenka

Miserere, ZWV 57

Miserere I

Miserere II

Gloria Patri I

Gloria Patri II

Sicut Erat

Miserere III

PERFORMERS

Choir

Soprano

Ellen Bialek*
Shelby Matlock*+

Tenor

Nathan Hilger*
Francis Williams*+

Alto

Katie Bruton
John Irving

Bass

Michael Davidson
Riley King*+

*Young Artist
+Soloist

Orchestra

Violin I

Denise Blehm
Laura Black

Oboe/Bassoon

Kay Werth
Shelby Westfahl

Viola

Shokhrukh Sadikov

Cello

Ben Cline

Organ

Max Holman

Alex Underwood, conductor

Johann Sebastian Bach

Born March 31, 1685, in Eisenach, Germany

Died July 28, 1750, in Leipzig, Germany

With his arsenal of musical compositions and army of talented offspring, Johann Sebastian Bach has every right to be called the godfather of Western music. Such embellishment, however, does a disservice to both Bach and his fellow composers, but the richness and humanity of his compositions continue to place him in a class unto himself. With the exception of opera, Bach composed in every major musical genre common to his era, and in the realm of the cantata, he was without peer. The basic musical unit of Protestant worship at that time, the cantata is a work for chorus, soloists and an instrumental ensemble. There was no strict format for a cantata, but in general, they consisted of a series of movements alternating between the chorus, soloists and traditional Lutheran hymns, called chorales. Performed before the sermon, a cantata contained a combination of Biblical and original text all geared towards the spiritual focus of that Sunday's services. This meant that a different cantata was required each week of the liturgical year, a condition that would test Bach's creativity later throughout his career. (He frequently recycled music from earlier cantatas.)

Cantata 131 (a modern numbering) was among the first cantatas Bach ever composed. Current scholarship places its composition at some point in 1707, the year Bach took up the post of organist at the Divi Blasii Church in Mühlhausen. The Biblical portion of the libretto comes from Psalm 130, one of the Penitential Psalms. (Psalm 51, used in Zelenka's *Miserere*, is also a Penitential Psalm.) There is further speculation that the cantata was written and performed in memoriam after a fire had devastated part of Mühlhausen earlier that year. The redemptive emphasis of the cantata's text supports such a notion, though the strength of Bach's expression makes its performance appropriate for a variety of spiritual occasions.

Although it is an early cantata, it contains many of the hallmarks of Bach's mature efforts: the opening movement begins with a "Sinfonia" (or symphony) for the instruments alone, which then segues into the first choral statement, "Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir," (Out of the depths, I call, O Lord, to You). An arioso section follows for a bass soloist, accompanied by solo oboe and the basso continuo. Bach embroiders the arioso with a chorale quotation given to the soprano section of the chorus. A movement for the full chorus comes next, followed by another soloist-choir combination: a tenor aria embellished by the alto section of the choir with another chorale quotation. The cantata concludes with a solemn fugal passage culminating in a subdued, but hopeful, statement of optimism regarding divine mercy.

Jan Dismas Zelenka

Born October 16, 1679, in Louňovice pod Blaníkem, Bohemia

Died December 23, 1745, in Dresden, Germany

Though not a household name like his contemporary Johann Sebastian Bach, Jan Dismas Zelenka nevertheless remains a seminal figure in Baroque music. A Jesuit-educated Bohemian, Zelenka spent the majority of his life and career based in the German city of Dresden. Here he was active as both a composer and performer—his primary instrument was the violone, an ancestor of the modern double bass. His Catholic faith stood him in good stead with the newly converted rulers of the city and his work with the Hofkapelle (court orchestra) included numerous liturgical compositions that increased his prestige and salary. (Evidence suggests that he was an acquaintance of the Protestant Johann Sebastian Bach, who allegedly copied out some of Zelenka's works for performance.) In spite of his successes and the high regard of his peers, Zelenka's output was not particularly plentiful and only a handful of his works continued to be performed following his death in 1745. The advocacy of Czech composer Bedřich Smetana and a wealth of recordings in the 1960s and 70s have since revived Zelenka's prestige for future generations to enjoy.

Zelenka's sacred vocal works show a composer skilled at handling even the most familiar of texts. They also show he was a master of counterpoint and musical architecture. Consider the *Miserere*. Composed in 1738 for Holy Week celebrations, its text combines the well-known Psalm 51 along with the *Gloria Patri*. Structurally, it presents an excellent example of musical symmetry in action. The opening movement (*Miserere I*) launches into a pulsating, stormy passage for the chorus that is reprised at the work's conclusion (*Miserere III*). The second and fifth movements (*Miserere II* and *Sicut Erat*) share a significant amount of musical material in spite of their textual differences. (Note the shared presence of the crucial theme "*Miserere mei, Deus*" repeated emphatically by the basses underneath an elaborate canopy spun by the other voices.) The two central movements, the twin *Gloria Patri*, present contrasting mediations on the same text: one for soprano soloist and the other a noble statement for the entire chorus. Such distinctions differentiate Zelenka's setting of the *Miserere* from those before and after.

—Ryan M. Prendergast

Johann Sebastian Bach

“Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir,”

BWV 131

I. Sinfonia. Chor.

Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, Herr, zu dir.

Herr, höre meine Stimme, laß deine Ohren
merken auf die Stimme meines Flehens!

(Psalm 130: 1-2)

II. Arioso und Choral

So du willst, Herr, Sünde zurechnen, Herr, wer
wird bestehen?

Denn bei dir ist die Vergebung, daß man dich
fürchte.

(Psalm 130: 3-4)

Erbarm dich mein in solcher Last,

Nimm sie aus meinem Herzen,

Die weil du sie gebüßet hast

Am Holz mit Todesschmerzen,

Auf daß ich nicht mit großem Weh

In meinen Sünden untergeh,

Noch ewiglich verzage.

(Choral: “Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut”)

III. Chor

Ich harre des Herrn, meine Seele harret, und ich
hoffe auf sein Wort.

(Psalm 130: 5)

IV. Arie und Choral

Meine Seele wartet auf den Herrn von einer
Morgenwache bis zu der andern.

(Psalm 130: 6)

Und weil ich denn in meinem Sinn,

Wie ich zuvor geklaget,

Auch ein betrübter Sünder bin,

Den sein Gewissen naget,

Und wollte gern im Blute dein

Von Sünden abgewaschen sein

Wie David und Manasse.

(“Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut”)

V. Chor

Israel hoffe auf den Herrn; denn bei dem Herrn
ist die Gnade und viel Erlösung bei ihm.

Und er wird Israel erlösen aus allen seinen
Sünden.

(Psalm 130: 7-8)

I. Sinfonia and Chorus

Out of the depths, I call, Lord, to You.

Lord, hear my voice, let Your ears

Be attentive to the voice of my pleas!

II. Arioso and Chorale

If You choose, O Lord, to account for sins,

Lord, who shall survive?

For with You is forgiveness, that one might hold
You in awe.

Have mercy on me in such burden,

Take them out of my heart,

Because you have atoned for them

In the wood with deathly agonies,

So that I, with great woe

Might not perish unshriven,

nor eternally despair.

III. Chorus

I await the Lord, my soul awaits, and I hope in
His word.

IV. Aria and Chorale

My soul waits for the Lord from one morning's
watch to the other.

And since I, in my mind,

as I lamented before,

I am also a sorrowful sinner,

whose conscience gnaws him,

and would happily, in Your blood

be absolved of sins,

like David and Manassah.

V. Chorus

Israel hopes in the Lord; for with the Lord is
mercy and much redemption.

And He will redeem Israel of all its sins.

Jan Dismas Zelenka

Miserere, ZWV 57

Miserere mei, Deus:
secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.
Et secundum multitudinem miserationum
tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam.
Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea:
et a peccato meo munda me.
Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco:
et peccatum meum contra me est semper.
Tibi soli peccavi,
et malum coram te feci:
ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis,
et vincas cum judicaris.
Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum:
et in peccatis concepit me mater mea.
Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti:
incerta et occulta sapientiae tuae manifestasti
mihi.
Asperges me hysopo, et mundabor:

lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.
Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam:
et exsultabunt ossa humiliata.
Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis:
et omnes iniquitates meas dele.
Cor mundum crea in me, Deus:
et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis.
Ne proicias me a facie tua:
et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me.
Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui:
et spiritu principali confirma me.
Docebo iniquos vias tuas:
et impii ad te convertentur.
Libera me de sanguinibus, Deus,
Deus salutis meae:
et exsultabit lingua mea justitiam tuam.

Domine, labia mea aperies:
et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.
Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium, dedissem
utique: holocaustis non delectaberis.
Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus:
cor contritum, et humiliatum, Deus, non
despicias.

Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to thy loving kindness:
And according unto the multitude of thy tender
mercies blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.
For I acknowledge my transgressions:
And my sin is ever before me.
Against thee alone have I sinned,
And done this evil in thy sight:
That thou mightest be justified when thou
speakest, And be clear when thou judgest.
Behold, I was shapen in iniquity;
And in sin did my mother conceive me.
Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts:
and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to
know wisdom.
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean:

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Make me to hear joy and gladness;
That the bones which thou hast broken may
rejoice.
Hide thy face from my sins,
And blot out all mine iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God;
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from thy presence;
And take not thy holy spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;
And uphold me with thy free spirit.
Then will I teach transgressors thy ways;
And sinners shall be converted unto thee.
Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
Thou God of my salvation:
And my tongue shall sing aloud of thy
righteousness.

O Lord, open thou my lips;
And my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.
For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give
it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering.
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt
not despise.

Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua
Sion: ut aedificentur muri Jerusalem.

Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build
thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Tunc acceptabis sacrificium justitiae, oblationes,
et holocausta: tunc imponent super altare tuum
vitulos.

Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of
righteousness, with burnt offering and whole
burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks
upon thine altar.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto,

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit:

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in
saecula saeculorum. Amen.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be
forever. Amen.

Miserere mei, Deus.

Have mercy upon me, O God.

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Upcoming Concerts

Handel's Saul August 1st, 7:30pm
Trinity United Methodist Church

Handel's Saul August 2nd, 2:00pm
First Presbyterian Church, Hays KS