



# THE GLOBAL BACH COMMUNITY

Volume 1, Issue 1

October 2000

## Formation of the Global Bach Community



*An organization devoted to linking and supporting Bach organizations worldwide.*

**Don Wilkins**

*Global Bach Community*

In the year 2000, marking the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Johann Sebastian Bach, we announce the formation of The Global Bach Community<sup>SM</sup>, an organization devoted to linking and supporting local Bach organizations worldwide.

The Community seeks to recognize and foster the common spirit that exists universally among Bach lovers; to facilitate Bach-centered endeavors worldwide - musical, educational, social and spiritual; and to help the Bach community to flourish, in part through the ability to raise funds not ordinarily available to individual Bach organizations.

The naturally existing affinity represents an enormous potential for good, both for individuals and groups, and as a model of global community. It is our aim to realize this potential in The Global Bach Community<sup>SM</sup> and its communication arm, [www.bach-net.org](http://www.bach-net.org).

Featured on the web site is Toni Carey's report on the festivities in Leipzig. Information on performances sponsored by local Bach groups, links to other Bach sites on the web, and reports on Bach activities worldwide will be forthcoming.

## Report From Leipzig

*On Events surrounding the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bach's death.*

**Toni Vogel Carey**

*President, Bach Festival of Philadelphia*

The Bach Festival in Leipzig has been a gigantic Bach feast. We attended some nineteen events in six days, and that is less than 25% of what was available. What we heard ranged from the "merely" excellent to the soaringly sublime. Everything seemed to bring at least 4 curtain calls, usually more; this was a very appreciative Bach audience.

On Saturday evening, in the Gewandhaus, we heard (secular) cantatas 201 and 206, charmingly performed by the Bach Collegium of Japan, under Masaaki Suzuki. Sunday morning we were at the St. Thomas church, where Bach worked and is buried, for the Gottesdienst service, which was broadcast live. Sunday afternoon the Leipzig University choir gave a rousing performance, in period costume, of two more secular cantatas, 205 and 215. This was done in the main hall of the Hauptbahnhof (the largest train station in Europe). People stopped to listen on their way to and from trains, and there was an overflow audience for this free concert, so people found places on the floor, in baggage carts – you name it.

Sunday evening at the St. Nicholas church, where Bach also worked, Cantatas 30, 34, and 100 were performed by the Windsbacher boy choir and the German Chamber Virtuosi of Berlin, under Karl-Friedrich Beringer. Another concert, no doubt superb, was taking place at the same time at the St. Thomas church, but our concert was simply breathtaking. People stood on the pews at the end for countless curtain calls, until the choir relented and sang an exquisite a capella piece, Reger's 'Nachtlied,' which quieted everyone down and sent them home to bed.

On Monday evening we heard two wonderful concerts. Cantatas 75, 76 and 80 ("Ein Feste Burg") were performed by the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra and choir under Ton Koopman. Then we strolled over to the

*continued on page 2*

# Report From Leipzig

*continued from page 1*

beautiful old Stock Exchange building at 10:30 for the Goldberg Variations, played by Christine Schornsheim.

Tuesday we were back at St. Thomas church for the Art of the Fugue, played on the new organ (still unfinished) by Ullrich Boehme. Then back to Nikolaikirche for the Saxony Baroque Orchestra and Concert Vocale, excellently performing the 'Magnificat,' among other things. After this we retired to the famous Auerbach Ratskeller for wienerschnitzel and German beer. Finally, at 10:30 we were treated to a wonderful trio – sax, bass trombone and piano – doing jazzy variations on Bach.

On Wednesday morning, there was a chamber concert in the Music Salon of the Mendelssohn Hall, with Alexander Lubimov playing works by Bach in 19<sup>th</sup> century arrangements on the pianoforte. The highlight of the Wednesday schedule was a performance of the St. Matthew Passion in the Thomaskirche by the Collegium Vocale Ghent, under Philippe Herreweghe.

Thursday, having been unable to get tickets for the St. John Passion concert, we decided to take a train trip to Dresden for the day.

Friday was the climax of this extraordinary week, since it marked the 250th anniversary of Bach's death. We began at 7:00 AM with an organ recital by Boehme in the

Thomaskirche, televised live, which began a "24 hours Bach" program staged by EuroArts (check out [www.24hoursBach.com](http://www.24hoursBach.com)). A large screen near the Gewandhaus was set up, and we caught parts of the St. John Passion recorded live from Tokyo.

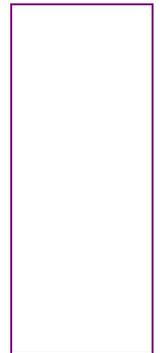
After the Musical Offering, also recorded live, and a chamber concert performance of The Art of the Fugue by Musica Antiqua Cologne, came the performance of the Mass in B Minor in the Thomaskirche by the Thomannerchor and the Gewandhaus Orchestra, under Georg Biller. This too was recorded live, and was a magnificent culmination of this great week-long tribute to Bach.

The grand finale was an open-air concert called "Swinging Bach," recorded live, with Bobby McFerrin, members of the Gewandhaus Orchestra and others. The whole market place (Leipzig is one of two old fair towns in Germany) was jammed with people, and even the rain couldn't put much of a damper on this amazing celebration. Bach would have loved it. The Bach Archiv, which organized this 10-day-long Bachfest, did everything in its power to make up for the fact that Leipzig turned up its nose at the first and greatest Bach festival, as the scholar Christoph Wolff put it – the one that took place 1723-1750.



The Global Bach Community  
c/o The Bach Festival of Philadelphia  
8419 Germantown Ave.  
Philadelphia, PA 19118

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_