

Heavenly BACII

Arias & Cantatas of J.S. Bach

Amanda Forsythe
soprano

APOLLO'S
fire



BAROQUE ORCHESTRA
jeannette sorrell

ON PERIOD INSTRUMENTS





Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750)

HEAVENLY BACH | Arias & Cantatas of J.S. Bach

AMANDA FORSYTHE, *soprano*

APOLLO'S FIRE | The Cleveland Baroque Orchestra | *on period instruments*

Jeannette Sorrell, *conductor & harpsichord*

René Schiffer, *continuo cello*

CANTATA BWV 51 | *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!* (*Shout to joy for God in every land!*)

Steven Marquardt, *trumpet*

- | | |
|---|------|
| ① Aria: Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen! | 4:16 |
| ② Recit: Wir beten zu dem Tempel an | 2:19 |
| ③ Aria: Höchster, mache deine Güte | 4:58 |
| ④ Chorale: Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren (Alan Choo & Emi Tanabe, <i>violin</i>) | 3:31 |
| ⑤ Aria: Alleluja! | 2:07 |

from *Johannes-Passion*, BWV 245 (St. John Passion)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| ⑥ Aria: Zerfließe, mein Herze | 6:57 |
|-------------------------------|------|

CANTATA BWV 202 | *Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten* (*Wedding Cantata*)

Debra Nagy, *oboe obbligato*

- | | |
|--|------|
| ⑦ Aria: Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten | 6:39 |
| ⑧ Recit: Die Welt wird wieder neu | 0:28 |
| ⑨ Aria: Phoebus eilt mit schnellen Pferden | 3:14 |
| ⑩ Recit: Drum sucht auch Amor sein Vergnügen | 0:42 |
| ⑪ Aria: Wenn die Frühlingslüfte streichen (Olivier Brault, <i>violin</i>) | 3:02 |
| ⑫ Recit: Und dieses ist das Glücke | 0:44 |
| ⑬ Aria: Sich üben im Lieben | 4:18 |
| ⑭ Recit: So sei das Band der keuschen Liebe | 0:23 |
| ⑮ Aria: Sehet in Zufriedenheit | 2:37 |

from *Johannes-Passion*, BWV 245 (St. John Passion)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| ⑯ Aria: Ich folge dir gleichfalls | 3:33 |
|-----------------------------------|------|

TOTAL TIME: 49:56

Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!

ARIA

Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!
Was der Himmel und die Welt
An Geschöpfen in sich hält,
Müssen dessen Ruhm erhöhen,
Und wir wollen unserm Gott
Gleichfalls itzt ein Opfer bringen,
Dass er uns in Kreuz und Not
Allezeit hat beigestanden.

RECITATIV

Wir beten zu dem Tempel an,
Da Gottes Ehre wohnt,
Da dessen Treu,
So täglich neu,
Mit lauter Segen lohnet.
Wir preisen, was er an uns hat getan.
Muß gleich der schwache Mund
von seinen Wundern lallen,
So kann ein schlechtes Lob ihm
dennoch wohlgefallen.

ARIA

Höchster, mache deine Güte
Ferner alle Morgen neu.
So soll vor die Vätertreu
Auch ein dankbares Gemüte
Durch ein frommes Leben weisen,
Dass wir deine Kinder heißen.

CHORALE

Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren
Gott Vater, Sohn, Heiligem Geist!
Der woll in uns vermehren,
Was er uns aus Gnaden verheißt,

Shout for joy to God in every land!

ARIA

*Shout for joy to God in every land!
All the creatures contained in heaven and earth
must exalt his glory,
and to our God we would
now likewise bring an offering,
since in affliction and distress
at all times he has stood by us.*

RECITATIVE

*We pray at the temple
where God's honour dwells,
where his faithfulness
that is renewed every day
rewards us with unmixed blessing.
We praise what he has done for us.
Even if our weak mouths have to
babble about his wonders,
yet imperfect praise can still please him.*

ARIA

*Most High God, make your goodness
new every morning from now on.
Then to your fatherly love
a thankful spirit in us in turn
through a devout life will show
that we are called your children.*

CHORALE

*May there be praise and glory and honour
for God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit!
May it be his will to increase in us
what he promises us through his grace,*

Dass wir ihm fest vertrauen,
Gänzlich uns lass'n auf ihn,
Von Herzen auf ihn bauen,
Dass uns'r Herz, Mut und Sinn
Ihm festiglich anhangen;
Drauf singen wir zur Stund:
Amen, wir werdn's erlangen,
Glaub'n wir zu aller Stund.

ARIA

Alleluja!

Zerfließe, mein Herze *from Johannes-Passion*

Zerfließe, mein Herze, in Fluten der Zähren
Dem Höchsten zu Ehren.
Erzähle der Welt und dem Himmel die Not:
Dein Jesus ist tot!

Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten (Wedding Cantata)

ARIA

Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten,
Frost und Winde, geht zur Ruh!
Florens Lust
Will der Brust
Nichts als frohes Glück verstatten,
Denn sie trägt Blumen zu.

RECITATIVO

Die Welt wird wieder neu,
Auf Bergen und in Gründen
Will sich die Anmut doppelt
schön verbinden,
Der Tag ist von der Kälte frei.

*so that we firmly trust in him,
rely completely on him,
from our hearts build on him,
so that our heart, spirit and mind
depend steadfastly on him;
about this we now sing:
Amen, we shall achieve this,
if we believe from the bottom of our hearts.*

ARIA

Alleluia!

*Dissolve, my heart, in torrents of weeping,
The Highest to honor.
Proclaim to the world and to Heaven the news,
Thy Jesus is dead!*

ARIA

*Retreat, gloomy shadows;
Frost and wind, go to rest!
Flora's delight
Will grant the breast
Nothing but good fortune,
For she brings flowers.*

RECITATIVE

*The world is renewed;
On mountains and in valleys
Charm would bind herself in
doubled beauty;
The day is free of cold.*

ARIA

Phöbus eilt mit schnellen Pferden
Durch die neugeborne Welt.
Ja, weil sie ihm wohlgefällt,
Will er selbst ein Buhler werden.

RECITATIVO

Drum sucht auch Amor sein Vergnügen,
Wenn Purpur in den Wiesen lacht,
Wenn Florens Pracht sich herrlich macht,
Und wenn in seinem Reich,
Den schönen Blumen gleich,
Auch Herzen feurig siegen.

ARIA

Wenn die Frühlingslüfte streichen
Und durch bunte Felder wehn,
Pfleget auch Amor auszuschleichen,
Um nach seinem Schmuck zu sehn,
Welcher, glaubt man, dieser ist,
Dass ein Herz das andre küsst.

RECITATIVO

Und dieses ist das Glücke,
Dass durch ein hohes Gunstgeschicke
Zwei Seelen einen Schmuck erlanget,
An dem viel Heil und Segen pranget.

ARIA

Sich üben im Lieben,
In Scherzen sich herzen
Ist besser als Florens vergängliche Lust.
Hier quellen die Wellen,
Hier lachen und wachen
Die siegenden Palmen auf Lippen
und Brust.

ARIA

*Phoebus hastens with swift horses
Through the newborn world.
Indeed, because she pleases him well,
He himself would become a lover.*

RECITATIVE

*Therefore, Cupid also seeks his pleasure
When purple laughs in the meadows,
When Flora's splendour looks glorious,
And when in his kingdom,
Like fair flowers,
Ardent hearts conquers.*

ARIA

*When the spring breezes stroke
And waft through motley fields,
Cupid too is wont to creep out
To look for his finery,
Which is believed to be this:
That one heart kisses another.*

RECITATIVE

*And this is good fortune,
That through a lofty, favoured destiny
Two souls attain one adornment,
On which much welfare and blessing shine.*

ARIA

*To cultivate love,
To embrace in jest
Is better than Flora's transitory delight.
Here the waves gush,
Here laugh and watch
The victorious palms on lips and breast.*

RECITATIVO

So sei das Band der keuschen Liebe,
Verlobte Zwei,
Vom Unbestand des Wechsels frei
Kein jäher Fall
Noch Donnerknall
Erschrecke die verliebten Triebe!

ARIA (GAVOTTE)

Sehet in Zufriedenheit
Tausend helle Wohlfahrtstage
Daß bald in der Folgezeit
Eure Liebe Blumen trage!

Ich folge dir gleichfalls
from Johannes-Passion

Ich folge dir gleichfalls
mit freudigen Schritten
Und lasse dich nicht,
Mein Leben, mein Licht.

Befördre den Lauf und höre nicht auf,
Selbst an mir zu ziehen,
Zu schieben, zu bitten.

RECITATIVE

*So may the bond of chaste love,
Betrothed pair,
Be free from the inconstancy of change!
May no sudden incident
Nor thunderclap
Frighten your amorous desires!*

ARIA (GAVOTTE)

*May you see in contentment
A thousand bright days of well-being
So that in the near future
Your love may bear flowers!*

*I follow Thee also
with joyful footsteps.
And leave me not,
My life, my light.*

*Advance the way and hear no objection,
And draw me to Thee,
Move me, entreat me.*



Portrait of Bach by E. G. Haussmann, 1748

Bach and the Soprano: A Heavenly Partnership

by Jeannette Sorrell



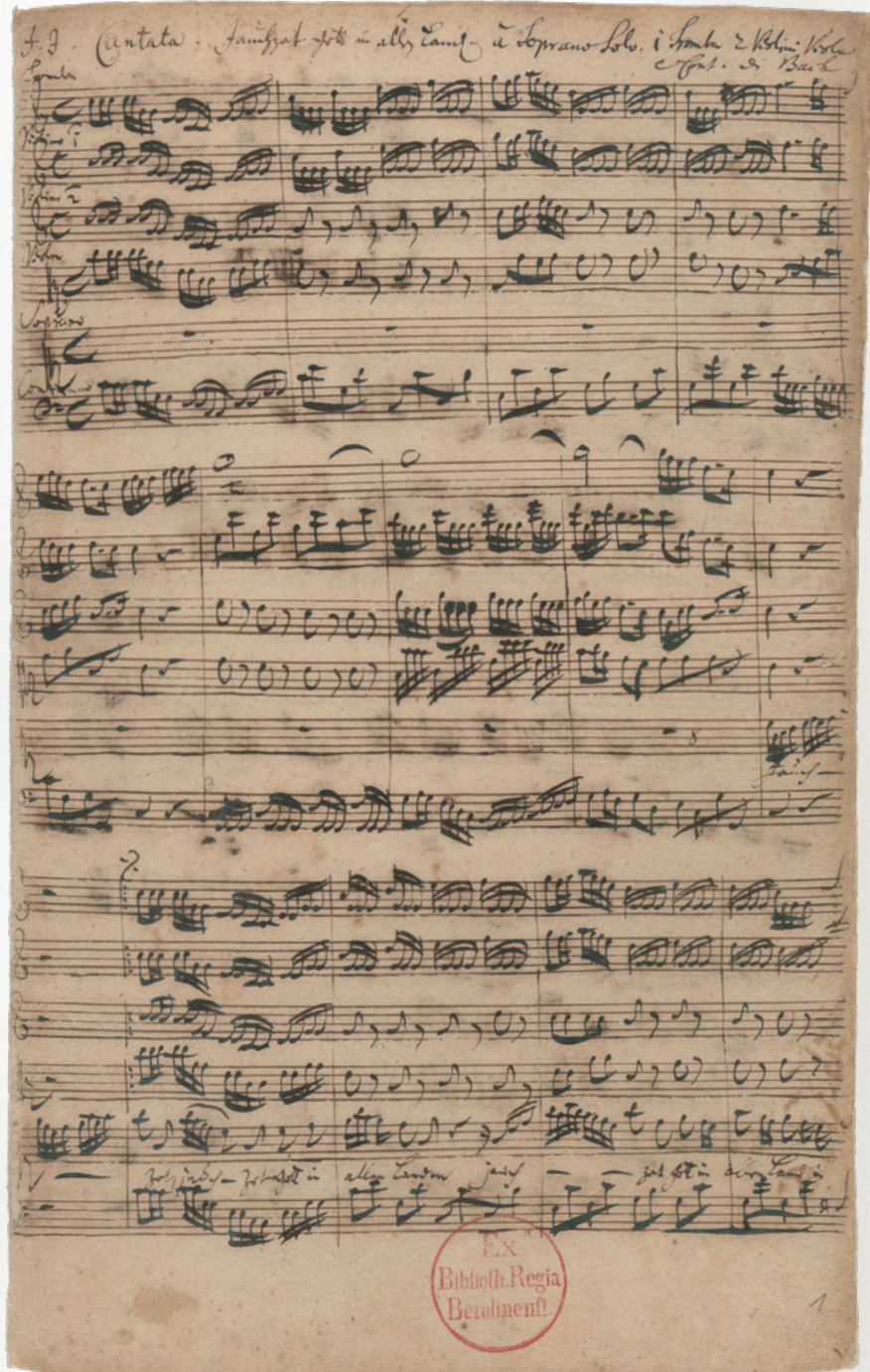
The title page to *Singende Muse an der Pleiße*, published in Leipzig in 1736. It has been posited that the people shown may be Bach and his wife Anna Magdalena.

It is not surprising that Johann Sebastian Bach married an excellent soprano singer. It seems that the soprano voice inspired him to many of his greatest bursts of creativity throughout his career.

In 1723, Bach and his wife Anna Magdalena, a professional soprano, left the comfortable palace in Cöthen where both had been employed as court musicians. They set out with their children for the bustling merchant city of Leipzig, where Bach had accepted the position of Cantor (director of church music).

Last Saturday at noon, four wagons arrived here from Cöthen laden with the household effects belonging to the former Kapellmeister at the court of the Prince of that place who has now been invited to become Cantor in Leipzig.

Thus, as the Leipzig press reported, Johann and Anna Magdalena began a new life. The Cantor post was an enormous job. In addition to providing the music for the city's principal churches, Bach was responsible for teaching the choirboys



Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen

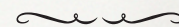
and recruiting the instrumentalists. Most of all, he was supposed to keep the city's wealthy burghers happy, which was not easy. There are few musicians today who would give up a well-paid post as resident musician to a Prince in exchange for a huge and difficult church job. The fact that Bach chose for Leipzig says much about the beliefs that shaped his life.

Bach composed the resplendent *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen* ("Shout for joy to God in every land") during his first decade in Leipzig, a few years after writing the *St. John Passion*. *Jauchzet* is unique among Bach's many cantatas thanks to the dazzling virtuosity required of the soprano and trumpet soloists. The joyful text of this cantata draws from several books of the Bible, especially the *Psalms*.

Did Anna Magdalena sing this piece? We do not know. But we do know that Bach used the dramatic techniques of Baroque opera to create a thrilling virtuoso romp in this cantata. The piece masterfully takes us through an emotional arc. The festive opening movement is a daring duel between a singer and a trumpeter – as if to see who could hit the high notes and hold them longer. By contrast, the central aria is an intimate and introspective meditation on faith, accompanied only by the continuo. The mystical ambiance of this aria is an example of Bach's extraordinary gift for evoking a sense of spirituality.

In the concluding two-part aria, we begin with an imaginative chorale setting. The soprano intones a verse from the Lutheran chorale *Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren* ("Now praise the Lord, my soul") over a lively fugal duet for violins. The exuberant final Alleluia explodes out of this chamber chorale and bubbles over with joy as the trumpet returns.

Taken as a whole, the cantata is both a joyous statement of faith and one of Bach's most exciting virtuoso works. He himself recognized its universal appeal, designating it not just for a specific Sunday in the church year, but for performance "in ogni tempo" – at any time.





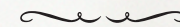
Bach's **Wedding Cantata, *Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten*** ("Be gone, troublesome shadows") lies a bit shrouded in mystery. We do not know for certain when or where it was written. The music survives only in a copy from the 1730s, but the style of the writing suggests it was composed earlier, probably when Bach was the organist at Weimar. Scholars believe the librettist was Salomon Franck, the Weimar court poet.

It appears that Bach composed the piece for a springtime wedding, either for friends or perhaps for his own wedding. The text does not refer to a noble patron, nor does it have an aristocratic tone. Instead, it beautifully evokes the arrival of spring through vivid pictorial writing. The cantata opens with a gentle rising cascade of arpeggios in the strings, suggesting flowers coming up and frozen brooks coming to life.

The oboe enters and soars above the strings, like the return of the sun. Then the soprano arrives, banishing the shadows of winter.

The middle section of this opening aria has a more playful mood, describing the pleasures of Flora (Roman goddess of flowers).

The galloping continuo line in the second aria depicts the swift arrival of Phoebus (the sun, aka Apollo) on his horses. The third aria uses a solo violin to portray Cupid (Love) sneaking around, working his magic during springtime breezes. The fourth aria features a playful, folksy oboe, full of high spirits. The cantata closes with a gavotte, a French dance that often ended a wedding celebration.



In Bach's time, Passions were composed by most of the leading musicians, including Telemann and Handel. And yet, their Passions have never made the impact on listeners that Bach's have. Bach's profound spiritual depth rings through the ***St. John Passion*** in a way



A sketch of the Bach Memorial in Leipzig

that transcends the compositions of his contemporaries. This is the work of a 39-year-old man, and is filled with the extroverted emotions and daring of a great composer still in experimentation with this genre.

Bach's use of the instruments at his disposal is colorful and often pungent. In *Ich folge dir gleichfalls* ("I follow thee gladly"), a pair of lighthearted flutes illustrate how Simon Peter (and all of us) follows Jesus with faithful footsteps. By contrast, the other-worldly combination of flute and oboe da caccia accompanies *Zerflesse mein herz* ("Dissolve in tears, my heart"). This haunting and heavenly lament on the death of Jesus is intensely intimate and personal. The writing requires masterful breath control from the soprano, making the aria unlikely for performance by one of Bach's boy-sopranos at the Thomasschule. Again, one wonders if Bach's wife Anna Magdalena was the intended soprano for this aria.

Postlude: After Bach's death in 1750, his sons came into conflict and drifted apart. Anna Magdalena, the excellent soprano who had been her husband's helpmate, music-copyist, and inspiration for 27 years, quickly fell into poverty. With virtually no financial support from her sons, she somehow had to care for herself and her two youngest daughters, plus her stepdaughter from Bach's first marriage. Almost totally dependent on charity and handouts from the city council, she died penniless in 1760. She was buried in an unmarked pauper's grave.

© Jeannette Sorrell, 2022 | Cleveland, Ohio



AMANDA FORSYTHE

“Amanda Forsythe was the star of the show.” – THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Soprano Amanda Forsythe enjoys bringing virtuoso artistry to major stages on both sides of the Atlantic. Praised as *“simply dazzling”* (NEW YORK TIMES), she has appeared repeatedly at such venues as the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden and the Rossini Festival in Italy. She is a frequent soloist with the Boston Early Music Festival, with whom she can be heard on the GRAMMY®-winning recording of Charpentier’s *La descente d’Orphée aux enfers*.

Ms. Forsythe has enjoyed a long and fruitful artistic partnership with Apollo’s Fire and Jeannette Sorrell. Forsythe’s solo debut solo album, *The Power of Love* with Sorrell and Apollo’s Fire, became an international bestseller in 2015, with BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE writing, *“Forsythe sets arias on fire; her handling of war-horses like ‘Da tempeste’ (Giulio Cesare) will amaze even the jaded connoisseur.”* She can also be heard on the Apollo’s Fire albums of Handel’s *Messiah*, Bach’s *St. John Passion*, and works of Mozart.

In North America, Ms. Forsythe has appeared with such orchestras as the Boston Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Boston Baroque, and recently made her *début* with the New York Philharmonic under the baton of Jeannette Sorrell. Opera house engagements have included Handel’s *Semele* (Philadelphia) and *Pamina* in Mozart’s *Zauberflöte* (Seattle Opera).

Her European concerts have included the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra with John Eliot Gardiner, The Moscow Philharmonic, Rome’s Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia with Antonio Pappano, and Les Talens Lyriques with Christophe Rousset. On Europe’s opera stages, she has appeared at the Berlin Komische Oper and the opera houses of Geneva and Munich, in addition to several engagements at the Rossini Festival in Pesaro and Covent Garden, where her most recent performances as *Marzelline* in *Fidelio* received rave reviews.

Ms. Forsythe toured Europe and the USA with French countertenor Philippe Jaroussky, performing works based on the Orfeo myth. She recorded the role of Euridice with Jaroussky in the 1774 version of Gluck’s *Orfeo*, on the ERATO label. A graduate of Vassar College, she grew up in New York City and makes her home in Boston.



JEANNETTE SORRELL

“Sorrell led a resplendent performance... breathtaking.” – NEW YORK TIMES

GRAMMY®-winning conductor Jeannette Sorrell is recognized internationally as one of today’s most compelling interpreters of Baroque and Classical repertoire. She is the subject of the 2019 documentary by Oscar-winning director Allan Miller, titled *PLAYING WITH FIRE: Jeannette Sorrell and the Mysteries of Conducting*.

Sorrell studied conducting at the Aspen and the Tanglewood music festivals under Leonard Bernstein and Roger Norrington and harpsichord with Gustav Leonhardt in Amsterdam. She won First Prize in the Spivey International Harpsichord Competition, competing against over 70 harpsichordists from Europe, Israel, the U.S., and the Soviet Union.

Sorrell made her New York Philharmonic conducting debut to rave reviews in 2021. She has repeatedly conducted the Pittsburgh Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Utah Symphony, Florida Orchestra, and New World Symphony, and has also led the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic (Bach’s *St. John Passion*), the National Symphony at the Kennedy Center, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Opera St. Louis with the St. Louis Symphony, and Philharmonia Baroque in San Francisco, among others. Upcoming debuts include the Philadelphia Orchestra (*Handel’s Messiah*) and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León (Spain).

As founder and conductor of APOLLO’S FIRE, she has led the renowned ensemble at London’s BBC Proms, Carnegie Hall, Madrid’s Royal Theatre, London’s Wigmore Hall, and the Tanglewood, Ravinia, and Boston Early Music festivals, among others. Sorrell and Apollo’s Fire have released 30 commercial CDs, including 11 bestsellers on the Billboard classical chart and a 2019 GRAMMY® winner. Her CD recordings of the Bach *St. John Passion* and Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons* have been chosen as best in the field by the Sunday Times of London (2020 and 2021). Her Monteverdi Vespers recording was chosen by BBC Music Magazine as one of “30 Must-Have Recordings for Our Lifetime” (September 2022).

Sorrell has attracted national attention and awards for creative programming, using contextual and dramatic elements. She received an honorary doctorate from Case Western Reserve University and an award from the American Musicological Society.

APOLLO'S FIRE

“Sorrell and her dazzling period band... are incandescent.” – THE SUNDAY TIMES, London



Named for the classical god of music and the sun, Apollo's Fire is a GRAMMY®-winning ensemble. Founded by award-winning harpsichordist and conductor Jeannette Sorrell, the period band is dedicated to the baroque ideal that music should evoke the various *Affekts* or passions in the listeners. The Apollo's Fire musicians are creative artists who share Sorrell's passion for drama and rhetoric.

Apollo's Fire has performed five European tours, with sold-out concerts at the BBC Proms in London, Madrid's Royal Theatre, Bordeaux's Grand Théâtre de l'Opéra, the National Concert Hall of Ireland, and venues in France, Italy, Austria, and Portugal.

Chosen by the DAILY TELEGRAPH as one of London's "Best 5 Classical Concerts of the Year," Apollo's Fire's 2014 London performance was praised for "*superlative music-making... combining European stylishness with American entrepreneurialism.*"

North American tour engagements include Carnegie Hall (twice), the Tanglewood and Ravinia festivals (3 times), the Boston Early Music

Festival series, the Aspen Music Festival, Library of Congress, the National Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, and major venues in Toronto, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Most of these concerts have been sold out. In 2021, Apollo's Singers made their debut with the New York Philharmonic under the baton of Jeannette Sorrell, winning rave reviews.

At home in Cleveland, Apollo's Fire enjoys sold-out performances at its series, which has drawn national attention for creative programming.

With over 10 million views of its YouTube videos, Apollo's Fire has released 30 commercial CDs and won a GRAMMY® award in 2019 for the album *Songs of Orpheus* with tenor Karim Sulayman. Eleven of the ensemble's CD releases have become best-sellers on the classical Billboard chart, including Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, Monteverdi *Vespers*, Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos*, and Sorrell's crossover programs including *Sacrum Mysterium – A Celtic Christmas Vespers*; *Sugarloaf Mountain – An Appalachian Gathering*; *Sephardic Journey – Wanderings of the Spanish Jews*; and *Christmas on Sugarloaf Mountain*.



APOLLO'S FIRE

Jeannette Sorrell, *Artistic Director*

VIOLIN

Olivier Brault, *concertmaster*^{2,3}

Alan Choo³, *concertmaster*¹

Julie Andrijeski, *principal*^{1,3}

Adriane Post³, *principal*²

Johanna Novom^{2,3}

Chloe Fedor¹

Evan Few

Andrew Fouts^{1,2}

Edwin Huizinga²

Carrie Krause¹

Emi Tanabe

TRAVERSO

Kathie Stewart²

OBOE

Debra Nagy^{2,3}

TRUMPET

Steven Marquardt¹

HARPSICHORD

Abraham Ross³

Jeannette Sorrell¹

ORGAN

Peter Bennett¹

Jeannette Sorrell²

VIOLA

Karina Schmitz, *principal*^{2,3}

Kristen Linfante³, *principal*¹

Cynthia Black²

Yael Cohen¹

Andrew Fouts¹

CELLO

René Schiffer, *principal continuo*

Kivie Cahn-Lipman³

Rebecca Landell Reed^{1,2}

CONTRABASS

Sue Yelanjian



1 = Jauchzet
2 = St. John Passion
3 = Wedding Cantata



HEAVENLY BACH

Arias & Canatas by J.S. Bach

Amanda Forsythe, *soprano*

Jauchzet (tracks 1-5) recorded April 23-26, 2021
First Baptist Church, Shaker Heights, Ohio
St. John Passion (tracks 6 & 16) recorded March 5-7, 2016
St. Paul's Church, Cleveland Heights, Ohio
Wedding Cantata (tracks 7-15) recorded Feb. 9 & 12, 2018
St. Paul's Church, Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Recording Producer and Editor: Erica Brenner
Recording Engineer: Daniel Shores (Cantatas);
Thomas Knab (St. John Passion)
Cover photo: Tatiana Daubek
Booklet design: KeinZweifel

© 2022 The copyright in this sound recording is owned
by Apollo's Fire/Jeannette Sorrell
© 2022 Apollo's Fire/Jeannette Sorrell
www.apollofire.org
Marketed by Avie Records
www.avie-records.com

apollofire.org


AVIE
AV2547
822252254723

