



A concert by the countertenor Filippo Mineccia and Divino Sospiro, with 'arie per castrati' by Paisiello, and a visit to the Teatro de São Carlos, guided by architect Luís Soares Carneiro, completed the programme.

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EIGHTH J. S. BACH DIALOGUE MEETING
 MADINGLEY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, 10–15 JULY 2017

Designed to facilitate discussion and useful interaction between participants, the eighth Dialogue Meeting of the Bach Network (formerly Bach Network UK) included conventional papers and a lecture-recital as well as reports, panel discussions, a 'young scholars' forum' and 'flash announcements' in which delegates gave five-minute accounts of current projects. Those arriving early also received a tour with head gardener Richard Grant of the exquisite Madingley Hall grounds, designed by the eighteenth-century landscape architect Capability Brown and now including a twentieth-century topiary garden and several giant sequoias. Participants, numbering fifty-six and representing fourteen countries, included not only academics and graduate students but also independent scholars, professional musicians, representatives of several publishing houses and at least one novelist.

Perhaps the most important new information presented at the meeting concerned not Johann Sebastian Bach but his youngest son Johann Christian. In the course of describing a forthcoming publication on the composer's autograph sources, Stephen Roe (Stephen Roe Ltd) reported the recent discovery not just of a *symphonie concertante* previously known only from its incipit, but also of what is probably the composer's final work, a setting of 'The Dying Christian to his Soul' by Alexander Pope. Roe also noted that autograph manuscripts of some of Christian Bach's concertos show longer versions than those published, suggesting that these works might have been misjudged based on the texts which the composer offered to the public.

Closer to J. S. Bach was the engaging account by Stephen A. Crist (Emory University) of how he located three printed volumes of songs for voice and unfigured bass by Bach's younger friend Lorenz Mizler. Found among uncatalogued items at Yale, the three *unica* (published 1740–1743) are Mizler's only known compositions. One of the volumes was dedicated to Luise Adelgunde Victorie Gottsched, an important author whose husband was the writer and critic Johann Christoph Gottsched. It is disappointing, therefore, that Mizler did not publish settings of any of her poems – odd, too, that this volume came out shortly after J. C. Gottsched's student Johann Adolf Scheibe had criticized Mizler's music in a letter to his teacher. Unlike his notorious critique of Bach, Scheibe's scathing assessment of Mizler's rather tentative compositions does seem justified (even if it was motivated by jealousy, as Michael Maul suggested). Still, these 'select moralizing odes', to quote from the original title, were a part of the Leipzig musical scene during Bach's final decade; one of them begins with an apparent quotation from his 'Hunt Cantata', BWV 208.

A highlight of the meeting for many was the 'world launch' by Bach scholar Albert Clement (Universiteit Utrecht) and publisher Dingeman van Wijnen (Uitgeverij Van Wijnen) of a facsimile edition of Bach's Calov Bible, a massive three-volume scriptural commentary incorporating the composer's handwritten annotations. These have been a focus of investigations into Bach's theological interests, even his state of mind, during his later years. After their unveiling, many delegates crowded round for a closer look at the three massive leather-bound volumes, which comprise no fewer than 4,355 pages (on sale prior to publication for little more than a euro per page).



The most animated discussion was elicited by a roundtable on the so-called Fleckeisen Document, a letter uncovered by Michael Maul (Bach-Archiv Leipzig) in which a candidate for a provincial cantorship claims to have substituted for Bach for two years as director of church music at Leipzig during the 1740s. Following a characteristically lively introduction by Barbara M. Reul (Luther College, University of Regina), Maul summarized his findings but did not endorse the view (enshrined in popular media reports of the discovery) that Bach suffered from ‘burn-out’ during the 1740s. After the presentation of a short video documenting Maul’s research (online at lisa.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/das_geheimnis_fleckeisen?nav_id=5366&language=de), Robin Leaver (Westminster Choir College of Rider University) argued in response that if the ageing Bach had indeed abdicated some of his responsibilities, it could have reflected a continuation of the ‘Battle of the Prefects’. In the latter – an all-too-familiar type of academic dispute – a new rector at Leipzig’s St Thomas School had revoked the right of a long-time staff member (Bach) to appoint student assistants. Leaver emphasized that, although favouring a more up-to-date approach to teaching, the new rector advocated no departures from Lutheran orthodoxy (as has been suggested). Leaver’s presentation called to mind the current obsession of so many educators with STEM and other topics more obviously useful than music, and also raised the possibility (at least for this listener) that Bach was a not entirely blameless victim of everyday philistinism and petty power politics.

Other panel discussions included a conversation between Michael Marissen (Swarthmore College) and theologian Jeremy S. Begbie (Duke University), moderated by Bettina Varwig (King’s College London; now University of Cambridge), on ‘Bach and God’ (the title of Marissen’s recent book); a roundtable with Andrew Parrott (Taverner Consort, Choir and Players), Fred Fehleisen (The Juilliard School) and Daniel R. Melamed (Indiana University) on ‘the performance–academic discourse’; and a discussion of ‘Bach’s quaver notation’ by Yo Tomita (Queen’s University of Belfast) and me (David Schulenberg, Wagner College), after which pianist Daniel Martyn Lewis endeavoured to illustrate the possible implications of Bach’s beaming (or lack thereof) of small note values. The only other musical presentation was Chiara Bertoglio’s very capable performance of ten of Bach’s organ chorales, in challenging piano arrangements by Ferruccio Busoni from 1907–1909. The set is rarely played in its entirety despite having been conceived as a cycle, as Bertoglio argued in prefatory remarks.

Of the presentations by young(er) scholars, this listener was particularly impressed by that of Sjur Haga Bringeland (Bergen and Leipzig), who showed that Bach’s earliest works call, not surprisingly, for an earlier type of recorder than later ones. Hence the low-lying *flauto* parts of BWV71 and BWV106 (the ‘Actus tragicus’) fit well on the Hotteterre-style instruments first produced during the last decades of the seventeenth century. ‘Second-generation’ instruments by a maker such as Denner are more effective in recorder parts from Bach’s Leipzig works, with their higher tessituras. Japanese Bach reception was the subject of ‘Bach and the Samurai’ by Thomas Cressy (Glasgow, Tokyo and Oxford).

In the ‘flash announcements’, Stephen Rose (Royal Holloway University of London) previewed a forthcoming study of ‘musical authorship from Schütz to Bach’, and Ruth Tatlow (Bach Network) promised to extend her studies of ‘proportional parallelism’ – symmetries involving the numbers of bars making up pieces within collections – to Bach’s pupils and others. Andrew Frampton (University of Oxford) is continuing valuable work on Johann Friedrich Agricola, a pupil of Bach, and Johann Joachim Quantz, translator of Pier Francesco Tosi’s *Opinioni de’ cantori antichi e moderni* and composer for Frederick the Great; and Bettina Varwig will argue that ‘musical physiology’ is more than a metaphor in works such as *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut* (My Heart is Swimming in Blood), BWV199.

The programme of the meeting and abstracts are online at bachnetwork.co.uk/dialogue/DM8Programme_FULLL.pdf.

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