

Joan Lippincott, *organ*
Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble
Robert Mealy, *director*

First Lutheran Church of Boston
Wednesday, June 25 & Thursday, June 26, 2014, 8:45 p.m.

Concerto in B-flat Major, Op. 4, No. 2, HWV 290

Sinfonia: *A tempo ordinario e staccato*

Allegro

Adagio e staccato

Allegro ma non presto

Georg Frideric Handel

(1685–1759)

Concerto in E-flat Major, Wq 35

Allegro ma non troppo

Adagio poco e sostenuto

Allegro assai

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach

(1714–1788)

Concerto in D Minor

Allegro (*Cantata No. 146:I*)

Adagio (*Cantata No. 146:II*)

Allegro (*Cantata No. 188:I*)

Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685–1750)

*Joan Lippincott is represented by Karen McFarlane Artists, Inc.
Organ prepared by Spencer Organ Company.*

BEMF Chamber Ensemble

Robert Mealy, *concertmaster*

Sarah Darling, Abigail Karr, Jesse Irons, Emily Dahl, *violin*

Laura Jeppesen, *viola*

Phoebe Carrai, *cello*

Robert Nairn, *double bass*

Program Sponsors

This program is generously supported by Lee Ridgway and Donald Vaughan of Boston.

Program Notes

Eighteenth-century organ concertos number in the hundreds, and three major composers of them were George Frideric Handel, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, all keyboard virtuosos who wrote extraordinary concertos. Perhaps the Handel concerto on tonight's program is the best known, the J.S. Bach concerto less so in its organ version, and the C.P.E. Bach concerto least known of the three. We are fortunate now to have the extraordinary Packard Humanities Institute (PHI) edition of the complete works of C.P.E. Bach, and the score for the concerto we will hear tonight.

Handel's Concerto in B flat, Op. 4, No. 2, was written, as were all of his organ concertos, to be played (by Handel himself) during oratorio performances—Op. 4, No. 2 at a performance of *Esther* in 1735. Handel's design for his concertos was rather flexible in terms of the number of movements and in improvisatory elements. It is fascinating to ponder what listeners might have heard in Handel's time, since we know he improvised many movements or parts of them. But in the case of Op. 4, No. 2, we have a complete score with four engaging movements: Sinfonia, Allegro, Adagio, and Allegro ma non presto. The first serves as an introduction, and is taken from the opening of Handel's motet *Silete venti*, with arresting French-overture dotted rhythms; the second is based on an earlier trio sonata movement (Op. 2, No. 3), and is a reworked spinning-out of a vigorous theme; the third is an improvisatory sounding recitative; and the fourth a cheerful minuet extended by episodes of brilliant passage work for the organ.

The most famous of J.S. Bach's sons, Carl Philipp Emanuel, was a keyboard virtuoso and prolific composer, to which the more than sixty (of a projected one hundred and fifteen) volumes of the PHI edition attest. The Concerto in E flat, Wq 35, is one of two in the more than fifty keyboard concertos that was specifically marked for organ ("*orgel oder clavier*") in an early version, thought to be related to a performance on the chamber organ of the Princess Amalia of Prussia. The Concerto in E flat is a dramatic and expressive three-movement work—Allegro ma non troppo, Adagio poco e sostenuto, Allegro assai—characteristic of C.P.E.'s unique style, sometimes called *galant* and sometimes *empfindsamer* ("highly sensitive") *Stil*. One hears in this concerto the great variety of invention in C.P.E.'s composition, as well as his elegance and virtuosity.

Our thanks and gratitude go to the editors, especially Elias N. Kulukundis and Jason B. Grant, and staff of the new C.P.E. Bach edition (cpebach.org) for their early and ongoing cooperation in providing pre-publication copies of the score and parts for Wq 35. The performing parts, based on the critical edition, *Carl Phillip Emanuel Bach: The Complete Works*, were made available by the publisher, the Packard Humanities Institute of Los Altos, California.

In 1726, J.S. Bach wrote six cantatas with movements calling for organ solo. These organ obbligato movements were later transformed into harpsichord concertos (see Joan Lippincott's recording *Sinfonia*, on the GOTHIC label, for a complete recording of these works), and three of the movements (Cantata 146, nos. 1 and 2; and Cantata 188, no. 1) became the well-known harpsichord concerto BWV 1052. Both the cantata versions and BWV 1052 are thought to have had their origin in an early violin concerto, now lost. Tonight's performance, inspired by the cantata versions, presents the Concerto in D Minor with organ solo. The opening Allegro is a vigorous movement with extensive solo episodes for the organ, including double-stop and bariolage violin figuration. The Adagio is a quasi-ostinato form, framed by a unison figure performed by the ensemble. The concluding Allegro is a lively dance in $\frac{3}{4}$ with increasingly complex organ solos alternating with the opening ritornello theme. The cantata organ obbligato movements were written for large three-manual instruments at St. Thomas and St. Nicholas churches in Leipzig, suggesting a fuller sound—in contrast to the Handel concerto organ of seven stops. The Richards, Fowkes organ at First Lutheran Church is ideally suited to this aesthetic.

– Joan Lippincott