



JS Bach's forebears

Music by Heinrich, Johann Christoph and Johann Michael Bach

In October 1707, Bachs from far and wide converged on the village of Dornheim for a great family celebration. Johann Sebastian — 22 years of age and already a rising star — was to marry his distant cousin Maria Barbara Bach.

Maria Barbara's father, Johann Michael, had a formidable reputation as one of the most illustrious Bachs of the previous generation. He spent his early life in Arnstadt, went on to hold the prestigious posts of town clerk and organist in Gehren and was, as JS Bach later described him, an "able composer".

Perhaps even more eminent was Johann Michael's brother, Johann Christoph, who had the good fortune to work with several of the greatest musicians of his age — including Johann Pachelbel and JS Bach's father Ambrosius. The Bachs counted him among their brightest stars: JS Bach continued to promote his works in Leipzig well into the eighteenth century; and CPE Bach described him as "the great and expressive composer".

Both Johann Christoph and Johann Michael had learnt their art from their father, Heinrich Bach, who was described in his funeral eulogy as an "organist who touched the heart... a musician famous for his art". Heinrich's 'Ich danke dir, Gott' opens the programme.

Heinrich Bach 'Ich danke dir, Gott'

Johann Michael Bach 'Liebster Jesu, hör mein Flehen'

Anon 'Es ist g'nug'

H Bach *Sonata à 5*

Johann Christoph Bach 'Die Furcht des Herren'

JC Bach 'Ach, dass ich Wassers gnug hätte'

H Bach *Sonata à 5*

JC Bach 'Mein Freundin, du bist schön'

CAMBRIDGE

Thursday 23 September 2010
7.30pm West Road Concert Hall

LONDON

Friday 24 September 2010
7.30pm Wigmore Hall

Pre-concert talks with Richard Egarr at 6.30pm

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