

# City Bach Cantata Series 40th Anniversary Concert



Friday 11 November 2016, 1.05pm

St. Mary-at-Hill Church,  
Lovat Lane, London EC3R 8EE

## A Note of Welcome

As curator of the Friday lunchtime concert series now based at this church, it is my privilege and pleasure to welcome you here today for this special anniversary event, in which the City Bach Collective will bring their artistic skills to bear in continuing the historically informed tradition of Bach performance established by Peter Lea-Cox and further developed by Martin Knizia, spanning the past four decades between them. We are especially delighted that Peter is able to be with us in person as guest of honour on this auspicious occasion.



Music-at-Hill, in its original incarnation as St. Anne's Music Society, was conceived as an outreach ministry of St. Anne's Lutheran Church, and today's celebration offers a fascinating opportunity to reflect on the interweaving strands of music and worship that have underlaid our respective activities at St. Mary-at-Hill and St. Anne & St. Agnes, the two Wren churches which have played host to us over so many years and hold such an esteemed place in all our affections.

Stuart Whatton, B.Mus, FRCO, FRSA  
Artistic Director, Music-at-Hill

The City Bach Collective and Music-at-Hill wish to express their thanks to the Rector and Churchwardens of St. Mary-at-Hill for permission to host this special event. Part of the cost of mounting today's performance is sponsored by an anonymous member in appreciation of the lunchtime concerts and Bach Vespers that he has attended from time to time since the mid-1980s.

Music-at-Hill is twinned with the Tilford Bach Society, which runs concerts in Farnham and Tilford. Please visit [www.tilbach.org.uk](http://www.tilbach.org.uk) for more information.



Since 1982 St. Anne's Lutheran Church has supported the performance of Bach both in the Lutheran liturgy and also in special performances such as this one. The City Bach Collective is grateful for the support of St. Anne's Lutheran Church of this celebratory concert. Please visit [www.stannelslutheranchurch.org.uk](http://www.stannelslutheranchurch.org.uk) for more information.

# City Bach Cantata Series 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lunchtime Concert

11 November 2016 at 1.05pm

in association with Music-at-Hill  
St. Mary-at-Hill Church, Lovat Lane, London EC3R 8EE

J. S. Bach Cantata BWV 61  
*Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*

(first performed in Weimar, 2 December 1714)

1. Chorus
2. Recitative (Tenor)
3. Aria (Tenor)
4. Recitative (Bass)
5. Aria (Soprano)
6. Chorale

J. S. Bach Cantata BWV 62  
*Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*

(first performed in Leipzig, 3 December 1724)

1. Chorus
2. Aria (Tenor)
3. Recitative (Bass)
4. Aria (Bass)
5. Recitative duet (Soprano & Alto)
6. Chorale

The City Bach Collective

Soprano - Nicola Corbishley  
Alto - Patricia Hammond  
Tenor - Christopher Bowen  
Bass - Cheyney Kent

Violin 1 - Hazel Brooks (director)  
Violin 2 & Viola - Philip Yeeles  
Viola - Geoff Irwin  
Cello - Mary Pells  
Bass - Peter McCarthy  
Oboe 1 - Geoff Coates  
Oboe 2 - Gerry McDonald  
Horn - Julia MacDonell  
Continuo Organ - Simon Lloyd



**CITY BACH COLLECTIVE**  
[citybachcollective.org.uk](http://citybachcollective.org.uk)

In general, records of performances of Bach cantatas in the series from 11 November 1976 can be sketchy. There are more complete records of performances of the cantatas in the Bach Vespers series in association with St. Anne's Lutheran Church (from 26 September 1982). Cantata BWV 61 was first performed by Peter Lea-Cox and the Lecosaldi Ensemble in a service of Bach Vespers in December 1988. It has since been performed by Martin Knizia and the Sweelinck Ensemble in 2004, 2005 & 2010. Cantata BWV 62 was first performed, also by Peter and the Lecosaldi Ensemble, in December 1990, then again in 1998, and in 2008 and 2010 by Martin and the Sweelinck Ensemble. These are the first performances by the City Bach Collective.

## Cantata Translations

*Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* - Come now, Saviour of the Heathen

BWV 61

### 1. Chorus

Come now, Saviour of the Heathen,  
recognised as the Virgin's child,  
at whom all the world marvels that  
God has ordained such a birth for Him.

### 2. Tenor Recitative

The saviour has come,  
and has taken our humble flesh  
and blood on himself  
and accepts us as his blood relatives  
O highest goodness of all,  
what have you not done for us?  
What do you not still do  
every day for your people?  
You come and let your light  
shine with full blessing.

### 3. Tenor Aria

Come, Jesus, come to your church  
and grant us a blessed New Year!  
Increase the honour of your name,  
Promote sound teaching  
and bless both pulpit and altar!

### 4. Bass Recitative

See, I stand before the door and knock.  
If anyone will hear my voice  
and open the door  
I shall go in and have supper with him  
and he with me.

### 5. Soprano Aria

Open, my whole heart,  
Jesus comes and enters within.  
Though I am only like dust and earth,  
he does not want to shun me  
but to see his joy in me  
so that I become his dwelling.  
Oh how blessed will I be!

### 6. Chorale

Amen, amen!  
Come, you beautiful crown of joy,  
do not delay too long!  
I wait for you with longing.

BWV 62

### 1. Chorus

Come now, Saviour of the Heathen,  
recognised as the Virgin's child,  
at whom all the world marvels that  
God has ordained such a birth for Him.

### 2. Tenor Aria

Marvel, people, at this great mystery:  
the Supreme Ruler appears to the world.  
Here the treasures of heaven are discovered,  
here a divine manna is presented to us,  
O miracle! The purity will be  
entirely unblemished.

### 3. Bass Recitative

Thus from God's glory and throne  
goes forth His only-begotten Son.  
The hero out of Judah breaks forth  
to run His course with joy  
and to procure us fallen ones.  
O brilliant radiance, O wonderful light of  
blessing!

### 4. Bass Aria

Quarrel, conquer, powerful hero!  
Be mighty for us in the flesh!  
Take action  
to strengthen the power in us, the weak!

### 5. Soprano, Alto Recitative-Duet

We honour this glory  
and approach Your manger now  
and praise with joyful lips  
what You have prepared for us -  
the darkness does not confuse us  
and we see Your eternal light.

### 6. Chorale

Praise to God the Father,  
Praise to God, His only Son,  
Praise to God, the Holy Spirit,  
for ever and in eternity!

Translations edited by  
Vanessa Heine

## The City Bach Cantata Series: Origins

Peter Lea-Cox



*Peter Lea-Cox at St. Anne & St. Agnes Church, Gresham Street*

Shortly after my appointment as organist of St. Mary-at-Hill in 1976, I was sitting listening to a performance of Bach's Cantata 'Ich habe genu(n)g' in my other church, St. Jude's, Hampstead. The cantata was being given by some R.A.M. [Royal Academy of Music] Students and the idea occurred to me that I could use the Thursday Organ Recital Series at St. Mary's to present Bach's Cantatas, drawing on my sight singing students at the R.A.M. This would be a practical way of developing their skills, offering them opportunities for solo work, and with the aid of instrumentalists explore a repertoire which in those days was virtually unknown.

St. Jude's had already taught me the importance of Liturgy and the need to choose the 'right' music for the Sunday or Feast Day. This gave me the simple solution as to how to select the Cantata for our performances at St. Mary's.

The R.A.M. Library has a complete set of the Bachgesellschaft edition, and this became the source of my preparation of the orchestral parts. I can still hear the Head Librarian's voice ringing out 'Do be careful with those volumes' as I painstakingly copied the pages. Retreating to the vestry in St. Jude's, I spread out sheets of paper for each orchestral part and 'snipped and stuck' the lines, walking around the table!

I cannot say that our early performances were of the highest quality, but then the idea was to present and perform the music rather as Bach's performances must have been, without anything like enough preparation time. The soloists received a vocal score as a 'fee', but otherwise it was a question of gathering around the collection plate at the end of the Concerts

to recoup each person's travelling expenses! I seem to think that a return journey from the R.A.M. to Monument tube station cost about 50p in those days!

We were lucky to gain the help of a wonderful supporter, Henry Kelly, who worked for Lloyds Underwriting. He worked tirelessly, aided by a lovely artist who used to come and sketch whilst we rehearsed, to put attractive posters around and about. Henry was very generous with his time and hospitality. Many performances would conclude with refreshments at the Church. Then some of us would adjourn to a local wine bar. When St. Mary's was destroyed by fire in May 1988, he sought out other venues for us, notably St. Stephen Walbrook, St. Anne and St. Agnes and finally St. Katherine Cree, before we returned to St. Mary's in 1992. This led to possibly one of the most extraordinary performances of the B Minor Mass. Each Lent, when Cantatas were not available, we used Bach's Motets and Mass settings for the repertoire.



*Peter Lea-Cox and Ron Englund 'in consultation', Music Societies Forum February 1985*

The Series developed sideways in the 1980s. Ron Englund was running a Concert Series at St. Anne and St. Agnes and attended one of our Cantata performances. He invited us to repeat the programme at St. Anne's late in 1981. Inspired by a current Bach Vespers Series being held in New York, he set up plans for a similar Service. Bach Vespers at St. Anne's started in September 1982, and despite warnings that nobody would come out in the City on a Sunday evening, 175 people attended this inaugural Service. The rest is history, as they say.

The Series housed (and still does) some wonderful performers, not least Mark Wildman, who now in his position as Head of Singing at the R.A.M. has coached innumerable artists for the profession, as well as for the current series of Cantatas [the Kohn Foundation series] held to acclaim on Sunday mornings at the Academy.

In 1995, I resigned from St. Mary-at-Hill, due to my increasing workload at St. Anne's and our move to Devon. The Cantata Series was carried on here by Jonathan Rennert, whilst I

maintained 'my' Series at St. Anne's until the thirtieth Anniversary in 2006, when Jāna Jēruma-Grīnberga presented me with thirty red roses. In the later years, we would time the performances to coincide with Ron Englund's visits to the U.K.



*Martin Knizia and Peter Lea-Cox in St. Mary-at-Hill vestry, July 2014*

When St. Anne's congregation and Music Society moved back to St. Mary's in 2013 it was if the wheel had turned full circle, and I am delighted that The City Bach Collective has been set up to continue the wonderful work that Martin Knizia, who took over from me at St. Anne's, achieved during his eleven years as Cantor.

*Press listings of the first Bach Vespers*

**BACH VESPERS**  
Tomorrow, 6.30pm, St Anne's,  
Gresham St, London EC2 (589  
1484)  
This is an unusual venture whereby  
a Bach cantata – No 161, *Komm,  
du süsse Todesstunde* – and other  
of his works, principally the A  
minor Violin Concerto (soloist  
Stefanie Heichelheim), will be  
performed in the context of a  
Lutheran service. The Lecosaedi  
Ensemble is conducted by Peter  
Lea-Cox.

*The Times*  
25 September 1982

**BACH VESPERS (St Anne and St  
Agnes Church, Gresham St, EC2 ;  
today, 6.30 p.m.):** Bach's Can-  
tata No. 161, 'Komm du süsse  
Todesstunde,' performed by the  
Lecosaldi Ensemble in the setting  
of a Lutheran service, as the  
composer intended. All the  
hymns and other music will be by  
Bach and his contemporaries.  
Also 31 Oct. (Cantata No. 80) and  
5 Dec. (No. 70).

*The Observer*  
26 September 1982

## Bach Vespers

Martin Knizia



*Martin Knizia rehearsing at St Anne & St. Agnes Church, Gresham Street, November 2012*

I had been only a few months into my tenure as Director of Music at St. John the Evangelist in Notting Hill, when I received a call from Pastor Jana Jeruma-Grinberga, asking me if I was still available to take over the cantor and organist's position of Peter Lea-Cox, my esteemed predecessor at St. Anne's Lutheran Church. Although I was very happy at St. John's I couldn't resist this offer to work for a Lutheran Church in London – being Lutheran myself – and continue the long and famous tradition of performing Bach in the City of London.

At the beginning of my work at St. Anne's I was worried if I would be able to carry on with the Bach Cantata series as before, mainly since under my direction the players would perform on period instruments, whereas Peter's musicians played on modern instruments and chamber pitch. This switch meant that I would bring in my own Sweelinck Ensemble. But would these highly skilled and professional instrumentalists and singers be willing to spend a whole Sunday afternoon and good part of the evening for what amounted to expenses, which had been the standard for Bach Vespers for many years? (I did negotiate a modest fee increase!). As it was the musicians were very happy to perform Bach in its right liturgical context, and thanks to something which I call the 'St. Anne's Effect' the musicians were extremely keen and loyal, often asking me at the end of one Bach Vespers when the next one took place.

During my time at St. Anne's we performed some 70+ cantatas, the St John and St Matthew Passion (the latter filling the church with a performer to audience ratio of about 1:1), the Mass in B-minor, the Christmas and Easter Oratorio, as well as the Coffee Cantata, with coffee sponsored by Starbucks. For good measure, most of Bach's Concertos were played, as well as the largest part of his chamber music.

In 2015 I accepted the position of cantor and organist at the Pfarrkirche Berlin-Altglienicke. My first major church music event there earlier this year was a Bach Vespers with cantata BWV 93, 'Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten'. I had a lot of fun translating the St. Anne's Bach Vespers order of service into German, literally one to one. I was delighted to welcome St. Anne's Bach Vespers regulars Emily Atkinson, David Soar, Philip Yeeles and Geoffrey Coates to Berlin on that occasion, so for me it very much felt like the gap between London and Berlin had been bridged.

I am very happy to see that Bach Vespers in London continues to flourish. The Dutch Church having been added as a venue completes another circle for me: I was assistant organist there when I arrived in London in 1997, and it was there that the Sweelinck Ensemble performed its first Bach Cantata!

### **Continuing the performance of Bach in the City**

Cheyney Kent

When Martin left his position as Cantor of St. Anne's in July 2015, Hazel Brooks and I spoke with Eliza Zikmane, Pastor of St. Anne's Lutheran Church and Stuart Whatton, Artistic Director of the associated music society, Music-at-Hill, about bringing musicians in to the church on an occasional basis to go on with Bach Vespers. They expressed the enthusiasm and support that encouraged us to continue the tradition.



*Martin Knizia and Cheyney Kent, January 2015*

Reconstituting ourselves as the City Bach Collective, we performed the first in a new wave of Bach Vespers services on 31 January 2016. The simple enthusiasm for the music of J. S. Bach from the institutions, players, congregations and audiences that come to hear us sing and play is what maintains our optimism for professionally prepared performance of this wonderful music in the modern City of London. Many of the players are those who have taken part in Bach Vespers and the Bach cantata Series in years gone by and their experience, professionalism and extraordinary musicality is beyond value.

Above all we have had the good fortune to be in touch regularly with Peter Lea-Cox, who has been very supportive of the continuation of his series. Peter has provided us with material, advice and the easily-overlooked history of the series which we celebrate today. We are looking forward to playing our part in special events in 2017 to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the philosophical foundation of the music that Bach wrote for the Lutheran church.

## Former Participants in the City Bach Cantata Series

Leading professional musicians and others associated with the series recall Peter Lea-Cox and the City Bach Cantata Series

Professor **Mark Wildman** was appointed to the professorial staff at the Royal Academy of Music in 1983 and subsequently Head of Vocal Studies in 1990 and Professor in the University of London in 2013. For forty years until his retirement from public singing in 2013 he combined a busy performing career with that of a professor of singing at the Royal Academy of Music where his work continues.

"I first met Peter Lea-Cox in about 1973 when he was organist at St Jude-on-the-Hill, Hampstead Garden Suburb and soon after he became Assistant Course Officer at the Royal Academy of Music where I was a student and where he held the widest of briefs that included choral and 'early' music. I often sang in ensembles that he organised and the bass solos in a wide range of choral works, including all the large scale sacred choral works of Bach, the Passions, B minor Mass, Christmas Oratorio, Magnificat, and a great many of the church and secular cantatas including BWV 82 'Ich habe genug' (many times) and BWV 56 'Ich will den Kreuzstab' through to the works of 19th and early 20th centuries.

The experience of singing all those Bach works was, for me, formative and engendered what has become a lifelong fascination and love of the works of JSB which I now endeavour to pass on to successive generations of students at the RAM where we are currently engaged in a series of the complete performances of the cantatas. Peter made music-making great fun but he was always deadly serious about the music. He spared no efforts, was absolute in his commitment to it and the challenges, including on occasion a missing instrumentalist or singer, never daunted him. He carried on regardless and just sang the missing part whilst conducting with one hand and playing the chamber organ with the other!

Along with countless other students at the RAM at that time, I owe to Peter an enormous debt of gratitude for his inspiring work in so many ways and for the many opportunities he gave me to perform this great music. He is one of the under-sung heroes of the profession and of music education, one of our finest and a 'pure gold' musician. I am pleased to have this opportunity of paying this tribute and I salute him on this fortieth anniversary of the founding of the cantata series at St. Mary-at-Hill."



**Andrew Watts** is an international counter-tenor and professor of singing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and voice teacher on the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden.



"I first met Peter at the Royal Academy of Music -I was 17 - he had a rather small office and a desk that groaned under the weight of paperwork and scores. He asked me if I could sight-read - I assumed he knew I might be able to - and handed me a score and said there was gig on Thursday morning and see you there. That was my introduction to him and to his music making. Over the following years I think I took part in Bach Cantatas - Telemann Cantatas and the Lutheran Mass/Vespers at St Annes and St Agnes. I have a pile of scores that he gave me as payment for these concerts and services which are a treasured part of my library and often when singing Bach and using these scores I find little notes from Peter in the score. Peter was a genius and a terrific musician - he was spontaneous - clever and above all enthusiastic. He was the first "real" musician that I ever worked with and I treasure those events. My mum would also come to these cantatas and he made her feel part of the group too. Generous and fun, Peter is a musical "unsung hero" to the establishment."

**Stefanie Heichelheim** writes

"I trained as a violinist at the Royal Academy of Music, from 1976-1981, which is where I met and became friends with Peter Lea-Cox. For some years I played first violin in the Bach Cantata project with Peter, firstly at St. Mary-at-Hill, and later at St. Anne and St. Agnes.

I was lucky and played many of Bach's violin concertos and chamber music. It was a fantastic playing experience and has profoundly influenced the rest of my life.

As there was no money to pay for anything, let alone music, Peter used to make the instrumental parts from copies of the Gesellschaft scores, and I remember helping by snipping them into separate parts, then sticking them, line by line, onto A4 sheets of paper.



Working our way through the Bach Cantatas as we did, one player to a part, one cantata each month and as best as possible, the correct cantata to the nearest Sunday, inspired in me a love of Bach's music and realised a need to be immersed in it - a need which I believe is shared by many dear colleagues and friends. But most fundamental for me, Bach's faith shines through his music, acutely accurate and expressive, and so does Peter's faith shine through his life's work. Double inspiration, and so very alive! Thank you both."

**Jana Jeruma-Grinberga** is the Chaplain at St Saviour's Anglican Church in Rīga, Latvia. Jana was a pastor in the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Great Britain and, from 2009-2013, the bishop of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain (Photo: Prof Dr Ralfs Kokins, Faculty of Theology, University of Latvia)



"Peter was also, at one stage, organist to the Latvian Lutheran congregation which met at St Anne and St Agnes, and that is my first memory of him: playing wonderful preludes to the classic Lutheran hymns, and negotiating the Latvian liturgy with the 'gentle' assistance of the verger, who would bellow quietly in Peter's ear "you play now!". But the years in which I was privileged to work with Peter (and later with Martin Knizia, too) on the Bach Vespers series were truly among the best of my life. The process of learning about the Bach Cantatas, how to set them in a liturgical context, and how to make them live and speak to contemporary listeners, was a revelation. The way in which the structure fitted together - the Bible readings of the day, interpreted and commented by the sermon, and the illumination and depth of the Cantata commenting on the same texts - is among the most nicely constructed, and most profound, at best, services with which it has ever been my privilege to be involved. My very best wishes and blessings to all friends in London!"

**Simon Preece** writes

"I am a baritone now working mostly in opera choruses at Covent Garden, but when I first met Peter, in about 1990, it was through contacts we shared in the BBC Singers. I was booked to sing bass in the Lutheran Bach Vespers series for one Sunday and stayed for fifteen years.

Peter was extraordinary. We almost took for granted his remarkable keyboard skills and his ability to improvise even complex fugues in the style of Bach, but nobody could ignore his enthusiasm. He loved the music and gathered around him players and singers who shared his outlook. The result was a series of performances (put together on absurdly little rehearsal) which conveyed the sheer pleasure of taking part in such astonishing music. Doubtless there were many rough edges, but Peter's instrumentalists were highly accomplished, some magnificently so, and we singers gave of our best. Peter encouraged us all to enjoy ourselves: the technical requirements were never the main issue, and so, in cantata after cantata, concerto after concerto, the music took off. It was a delight to listen to recitatives, arias and concertos where my colleagues took the lead, and an honour to feel their support when I was singing. To perform music of the finest quality with hugely skilled colleagues and to have fun doing it – what could be better?"



**Mary Pells** writes

"I am still a professional performer specialising in early music on cello and viola da gamba but now I also do a great deal of examining and professional development work for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.

I started playing in the Bach Vespers series for Peter Lea Cox when I was a student at the Royal Academy of Music, so that must have been around 1981 or 1982. At the time Peter lived in the organ loft at St. Jude's, Hampstead, which was fairly eccentric. I remember vividly that I found the Vespers services at St. Anne's uplifting and spiritual. I particularly enjoyed Ron Englund's sermons and I thought it was very special to be playing Bach's religious music in a liturgical setting. An important landmark was Bach's 300th birthday celebration in 1985 for which I played some of his unaccompanied cello music.

It was a lucky coincidence and a pleasure to come back later under Martin's direction and to get to know Jana and the St. Anne's congregation as it was then."



**Robert Johnston** is Choral Manager of the BBC Singers, Director of RSVP Voices, and a tenor.

"I first met Peter Lea Cox in 1985 during my first week as a new, young and somewhat naive tenor student at the Royal Academy of Music. I remember all first study singers had to audition for the RAM's Chamber Choir and Peter was on the panel alongside Geoffrey Mitchell who ran the choir. With my background as a former cathedral chorister, and being a tenor, I was quickly signed up.

It wasn't long before I was approached by Peter and asked if I'd like to sing in a Bach Cantata lunchtime concert that coming Thursday. I accepted happily, not quite knowing what I was letting myself in for!



I arrived at St Mary at Hill, the first of many occasions before the fire brought a close to proceedings there a few years later, and was handed the cantata that we would perform in about an hour's time. If you're not experienced at singing Bach then let me tell you that even some of the choral writing can be fiendishly difficult. I struggled through and didn't make too many (glaring) mistakes. What really struck me though was the fabulous singing, sight-reading skills and tricks of the trade of those doing the solo recits and arias. Peter would lead from the harpsichord or organ with great bravado and would laugh with us if, due to such short rehearsal time, the odd phrase sounded more Birtwistle than Bach. However, with the great skill of Peter, the players and singers, this didn't happen very often.

It wasn't too long before Stephen Douse (the brilliant and preferred tenor soloist in those days!) wasn't available for a particular concert and I was asked to step in. This was the first of many future solo opportunities with Peter. The experience was always terrifying and exhilarating at the same time. With Peter's care, support and incredible musicianship, we always got to the end without too many mishaps. The sense of achievement, having delivered sometimes incredibly fiendish arias and choruses, was something we all felt together.

Peter was instrumental in bringing Bach, loads of Bach, into my life. He was and no doubt still is an inspiration and mentor to so many young musicians. I hope his legacy and the City Bach Collective continue to thrive and give such pleasure to the performers, the audiences and the congregations. Thank you Peter for your superb musicianship, enthusiasm and infectious laughter.

Oh, and by the way, are you wondering if money was involved? Well yes, actually, it was. After the Thursday lunchtime concerts at St Mary's we were allowed to take £1 from the retiring collection to cover our tube fare!"

**Caroline Lenton-Ward** is a freelance soprano, singing teacher at Sydenham High School and Goldsmiths University, and a choral conductor.

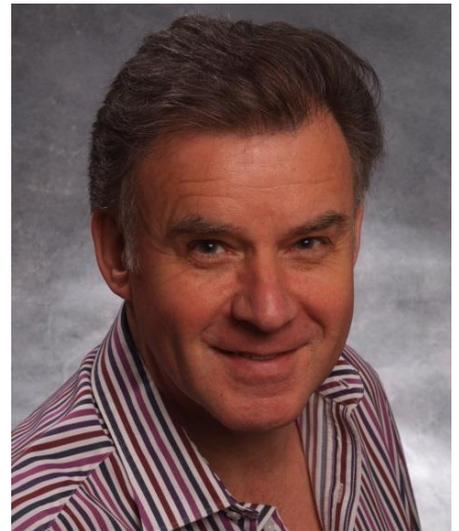
"I first met Peter Lea-Cox when I started my studies at the RAM. Peter was in charge of sight-singing classes for first years and it quickly became apparent to him that I found them far too easy! He invited me to sing in the Bach cantata series at St Mary-at-Hill and later to be a member of the Lecosaldi Ensemble. It was a great learning ground in ensemble singing as well as solo opportunities and we performed so regularly it was invaluable experience. Peter nicknamed me Carolinus and I am sure he would still call me that today! I continued performing with Peter long after leaving the RAM and have so many memories of him and lots of other musicians and singers involved. I owe Peter a huge debt of gratitude for his support and opportunities as a young singer."



**Jonathan Rennert** writes: "I was the Director of Music at St Mary-at-Hill from 1996 (in addition to my similar position at St Michael's Cornhill). During my time at St Mary's the organ was rebuilt and rededicated (having been damaged in a serious fire in 1988) and the Bach Cantata concerts were resumed. We performed several each year, following as closely as possible the correct liturgical sequence. The instrumentalists played 18th-century instruments (or copies of them) at baroque pitch. After experimenting with vocal and instrumental numbers, we decided that, in most cases, single voices and instruments to each part worked perfectly in the lively acoustic of the church."

**Philip Salmon**, tenor, writes

"I was lucky enough to be involved in some of the first cantata performances at St. Mary-at-Hill while I was still a student at the Royal College of Music, and with the first performances and services at St. Anne and St. Agnes. At that time I seemed to perform more with students of the Royal Academy than the RCM, and sang around 55 cantatas with Peter, as well as the Passions by Bach and Handel. The music making was serious but the atmosphere collegiate, collaborative and at times convivial! However, the highlight was always to witness Peter's tour-de-force prelude and fugue organ improvisations at the end of Vespers. Bach seemed to flow through him in full vitality. I have carried with me since not only the building-block experience of those performances but also what I feel to be an insight into the spirit of Bach, which has been invaluable in my career since. That and some glowing memories!"



*Bach Vespers at St. Mary-at-Hill, 25 September 2016. Photo: Andrea Liu*

Rear cover: St. Mary-at-Hill, looking north towards Eastcheap, 1976, courtesy of the London Picture Archive

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