

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH  
MUKA PO MATEJU

MATTHÄUS - PASSIOIN  
BWV 244

MJEŠOVITI PJEVAČKI ZBOR  
CHORUS ANGELICUS  
VARAŽDIN

ORKESTAR  
CAPELLA SAVARIA  
SZOMBATHELY

DJEČJI ZBOR  
GLAZBENE ŠKOLE  
VARAŽDIN

IVANA LAZAR  
SONJA RUNJE  
TIA PIKIA

HUGO HYMAS  
KREŠIMIR STRAŽANAC  
EMANUEL TOMLJENVIĆ  
GRGA PEROŠ  
FRANKO KLISOVIĆ

ANDELKO IGREC,  
DIRIGENT



# Johann Sebastian Bach: Muka po Mateju, BWV 244

CD1

01. Zbor s koralom: <i>Kommt, ihr Töchter, helft mir klagen!</i>	07:13
02. Recitativ: <i>Da Jesus diese Rede vollendet hatte</i>	00:40
03. Koral: <i>Herzliebster Jesu, was hast du verbrochen</i>	00:47
04. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Da versammelten sich die Hohenpriester</i>	02:56
09. Recitativ (alt): <i>Du lieber Heiland du</i>	00:47
10. Arija (alt): <i>Buß und Reu</i>	02:37
11. Recitativ: <i>Da ging hin der Zwölfen einer</i>	00:35
12. Arija (sopran): <i>Blute nur, du liebes Herz!</i>	03:04
13. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Aber am ersten Tage der süßen Brot</i>	02:04
16. Koral: <i>Ich bin's, ich sollte büßen</i>	00:44
17. Recitativ: <i>Er antwortete und sprach</i>	02:55
18. Recitativ (sopran): <i>Wiewohl mein Herz in Tränen schwimmt</i>	01:14
19. Arija (sopran): <i>Ich will dir mein Herze schenken</i>	03:14
20. Recitativ: <i>Und da sie den Lobgesang gesprochen hatten</i>	01:02
21. Koral: <i>Erkenne mich, mein Hüter</i>	00:57
22. Recitativ: <i>Petrus aber antwortete und sprach zu ihm</i>	01:02
23. Koral: <i>Ich will hier bei dir stehen</i>	00:57
24. Recitativ: <i>Da kam Jesus mit ihnen zu einem Hofe</i>	01:33
25. Recitativ (tenor) sa zborom: <i>O Schmerz / Was ist die Ursach</i>	01:41
26. Arija (tenor) sa zborom: <i>Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen</i>	04:57
27. Recitativ: <i>Und ging hin ein wenig</i>	00:38
28. Recitativ: <i>Der Heiland fällt vor seinem Vater nieder</i>	00:48
29. Arija (bas): <i>Gerne will ich mich bequemen</i>	03:42

30. Recitativ: <i>Und er kam zu seinen Juengern</i>	01:07
31. Koral: <i>Was mein Gott will, das g'scheh allzeit</i>	01:06
32. Recitativ: <i>Und er kam und fand sie aber schlafend</i>	02:13
33. Arija sa zborom: <i>So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen</i>	04:11
34. Recitativ: <i>Und siehe, einer aus denen</i>	02:10
35. Koral: <i>O Mensch, beweine deine Sünde gross</i>	05:15
36. Arija (alt) sa zborom: <i>Ach! nun ist mein Jesus hin!</i>	03:03
37. Recitativ: <i>Die aber Jesum gegriffen hatten</i>	01:01
38. Koral: <i>Mir hat die Welt trüglich gerichtet'</i>	00:57
39. Recitativ: <i>Und wiewohl viel falsche Zeugen</i>	01:10
40. Recitativ (tenor): <i>Mein Jesus schweigt zu falschen Lügen stille</i>	01:08
41. Arija (tenor): <i>Geduld! Wenn mich falsche Zungen stechen</i>	03:50
42. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Und der Hohepriester antwortete und sprach zu ihm</i>	02:03
44. Koral: <i>Wer hat dich so geschlagen</i>	00:47
45. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Petrus aber saß draußen im Palast</i>	02:49
Total length: 79:14:22	

## Johann Sebastian Bach: Muka po Mateju, BWV 244

CD2

47. Arija (alt): <i>Erbarme dich, mein Gott</i>	05:42
48. Koral: <i>Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen</i>	01:22
49. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Des Morgens aber hielten alle Hohepriester</i>	01:46
51. Arija (bas): <i>Gebt mir meinen Jesum wieder!</i>	02:43

52. Recitativ: <i>Sie hielten aber einen Rat</i>	02:06
53. Koral: <i>Befiehl du deine Wege</i>	01:08
54. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Auf das Fest aber hatte der Landpfleger Gewohnheit</i>	02:21
55. Koral: <i>Wie wunderbarlich ist doch diese Strafe!</i>	00:56
56. Recitativ: <i>Der Landpfleger sagte</i>	00:17
57. Recitativ (sopran): <i>Er hat uns allen wohlgetan</i>	01:06
58. Arija (sopran): <i>Aus Liebe will mein Heiland sterben!</i>	04:43
59. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Sie schrieen aber noch mehr und sprachen</i>	01:58
60. Recitativ (alt): <i>Erbarm es Gott!</i>	00:58
61. Arija (alt): <i>Können Tränen meiner Wangen Nichts erlangen</i>	07:43
62. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Da nahmen die Kriegsknechte des Landpflegers Jesum..</i>	01:09
63. Koral: <i>O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden</i>	02:12
64. Recitativ: <i>Und da sie ihn verspottet hatten</i>	00:31
66. Arija (bas): <i>Komm, süßes Kreuz, so will ich sagen</i>	06:17
67. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Und da sie an die Stätte kamen mit Namen Golgatha</i>	03:32
69. Recitativ (alt): <i>Ach Golgatha, unsel'ges Golgatha!</i>	01:22
70. Arija (alt): <i>Sehet, Jesus hat die Hand</i>	03:08
71. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Und von der sechsten Stunde an war eine Finsternis ...</i>	02:23
72. Koral: <i>Wenn ich einmal soll scheiden</i>	01:39
73. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Und siehe da, der Vorhang im Tempel</i>	02:37
74. Recitativ (bas): <i>Am Abend, da es kühle war</i>	01:37
75. Arija (bas): <i>Mache dich, mein Herze, rein</i>	05:35
76. Recitativ i zbor: <i>Und Joseph nahm den Leib</i>	02:37
77. Recitativ (solisti i zbor): <i>Nun ist der Herr zur Ruh gebracht</i>	01:53
78. Zbor: <i>Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder</i>	05:13
Total length: 77:35:55	

## **Antologijska Bachova Muka po Mateju, BWV 244 u vrsnoj izvedbi na 52. Varaždinskim baroknim večerima**

*Ivana Lazar, sopran*  
*Tia Pikija, sopran*  
*Sonja Runje, mezzosopran*  
*Hugo Hymas, tenor*  
*Franko Klisović, kontratenor*  
*Emanuel Tomljenović, tenor*  
*Grga Peroš, bariton*  
*Krešimir Stražanac, bas*

*Mješoviti pjevački zbor Chorus angelicus Varaždin*  
*Dječji zbor Glazbene škole u Varaždinu*  
*Capella Savaria*  
*Anđelko Igrec, dirigent*

U povodu 25. obljetnice osnivanja Varaždinske biskupije izvedena je 28. rujna 2022. godine u okviru 52. Varaždinskih baroknih večeri u varaždinskoj katedrali Uznesenja Blažene Djevice Marije na nebo antologijska *Muka po Mateju, BWV 244* Johanna Sebastiana Bacha. Velebnost toga jedinstvenog ostvarenja duhovne glazbe, čija izvedba traje gotovo tri sata, osobit je doživljaj koji je varaždinska publika već imala priliku iskusiti. Međutim, najnovija interpretacija „glazbene katedrale“ iz pera jednog od najvećih skladateljskih umova u povijesti čovječanstva snimljena je za buduće naraštaje zahvaljujući neumornom pratitelju glazbenih događanja u Varaždinu, nekadašnjem uredniku na Radiju Varaždin i tonskom majstoru Vladimiru Gotalu, te ostaje kao trajno sjećanje svima koji su izvedbu čuli, kao i ljubiteljima barokne glazbe u budućim generacijama.

Doista, sretan je grad, sretan festival i njegovi posjetitelji kojima se pružaju mogućnosti za susrete s najvećim ostvarenjima skladateljskog umijeća. A sretni su i glazbenici, interpreti, kao i njihovi budući slušatelji, koji će moći trajno ponavljati zvučne susrete ovjekovječene na nosačima zvuka Udruge

Aulos, čiji je Vladimir Gotal utemeljitelj. Eto, već vrlo bogatoj diskografskoj arhivi varaždinske udruge pridružuje se najnoviji album sa snimkom Bachove *Muke po Mateju* s navedenoga koncerta, kojim se slavilo postojanje sjedišta Varaždinske biskupije, koju je 5. srpnja 1997. godine utemeljio papa Ivan Pavao II, a kojoj je na čelu u vrijeme proslave 25. obljetnice bio biskup mons. Bože Radoš.

Za izvedbu velebne *Muke po Mateju* neophodan je brojan izvođački sastav. Svim već nabrojenim srećama koje prate Varaždin svakako valja pribrojiti i sreću postojanja Glazbene škole, koja obrazuje mlade talente, kao i činjenicu višestoljetne tradicije organiziranja i njegovanja amaterskoga zbornog pjevanja. Upravo na tim zasadama glazbene kulture grada izrastali su mnogi školski, kao i amaterski zborovi. Jedan od njih je Mješoviti pjevački zbor *Chorus angelicus*, oratorijski zbor koji je 1999. godine osnovao akademski dirigent, skladatelj i orguljaš Anđelko Igrec. Zbor je isprva djelovao unutar varaždinske katedrale, a od 2018. godine djeluje kao udruga građana koja okuplja profesionalne i amaterske pjevače svih dobnih skupina. Uz brojna druga ostvarenja iz bogate europske baštine velikih oratorijskih djela koja *Chorus angelicus* uvijek s velikim uspjehom izvodi, posebno mjesto svakako pripada zahtjevnom zadatku postavljenom pred zbor u Bachovoj *Muci po Mateju*.

Maestro Anđelko Igrec rado surađuje s vrsnim mađarskim orkestrom *Capella Savaria*, a zahvaljujući visokim kriterijima koje slijedi kad priprema neku novu izvedbu, trajno odabire sposobne i ugledne vokalne soliste. Uz sopranisticu Ivanu Lazar, angažirani su sopranistica Tia Pikija, mezzosopranistica Sonja Runje, tenor Hugo Hymas, kontratenor Franko Klisović, tenor Emanuel Tomljenović, bariton Grga Peroš i bas Krešimir Stražanac, u čije će se kvalitete moći uvjeriti slušatelji trostrukog albuma s izvedbom Bachove *Muke po Mateju, BWV 244* iz varaždinske katedrale 28. rujna 2022. godine.

## UGLAZBLJENJA KRISTOVE MUKE

Uglazbljivanje tekstova o Kristovoj mucu i razapinjanju na križ, bilo preuzetima iz Biblije ili pak pjesničkih obrada, ima vrlo dugu povijest. Od 4. stoljeća nakon Kristova rođenja, od gregorijanskih jednoglasnih napjeva pa sve do kompleksnih djela za soliste, zbor i orkestar, tema zaokuplja skladatelje. Glazbena su djela nastajala uglavnom na latinske tekstove, u srednjem su vijeku tekstovi nerijetko prilagođavani za narative u kojima je sudjelovalo više likova na način glazbenih drama, a

postupnim su produženjima i sve većom složenošću glazbenih struktura, osobito nakon uvođenja višeglasja, polifonije, glazbene evokacije Kristove muke i raspeća dobivale sve kompleksnija obilježja.

Osobitu zaokupljenost temom Kristove muke nalazimo kod njemačkih skladatelja u razdoblju baroka te napose kod autora koji su pripadali protestantskoj reformaciji. Među njemačkim skladateljima jednu od prvih i dugo popularnih Muka – *Passion* skladao je Johann Walther (1495. – 1570.), suvremenik i izravni suradnik Martina Luthera (1483. – 1546.). Dakako, ovo nije prigoda za ispisivanje duge i vrlo bogate povijesti i tradicije skladanja pasije/muke kao vokalno-instrumentalne duhovne glazbene forme, pa ipak valja imati na umu da je u rasporedu crkvene godine, koja se razlikuje od kalendarske i koju određuju dva velika kršćanska blagdana, Božić i Uskrs, bilo neophodno potrebno osigurati veća glazbena djela kao duhovni doprinos proslavi blagdana i glazbenom obogaćenju crkvenog obreda. U razdoblju priprema za blagdan Uskrsa, a to je vrijeme korizme kao pokorničke pripreve za Uskrs, posebno liturgijsko vrijeme kad se kršćane poziva na molitvu, pokoru i činjenje dobrih djela, osobitu važnost ima Veliki petak. To je dan Isusove muke i smrti, na koji se održava obred koji evocira Kristovu muku. U pravilu obred se održava u vrijeme Isusove smrti na križu, dakle oko tri sata poslije podne. Upravo za obred Velikog petka nastala su velebna vokalno-instrumentalna djela iz pera J. S. Bacha, njegove Muke, od kojih su danas najizvođenije *Muka po Ivanu, BWV 245* i *Muka po Mateju, BWV 244*, i to više ne isključivo u okvirima obreda Velikog petka i, dakako, više ne isključivo u crkvenim prostorima.

Bachovu *Muku po Ivanu, BWV 245* izveli su Zbor varaždinske katedrale *Chorus angelicus* i Hrvatski barokni ansambli uz soliste Huga Hymasa, Ivanu Lazar, Martinu Borse, Dejana Maksimilijana Vrbančića, Krešimira Stražanca i Matiju Meića pod ravnanjem Anđelka Igreca 1. listopada 2016. godine u okviru 46. Varaždinskih baroknih večeri. Varaždinska Udruga *Aulos*, koju je utemeljio i vodi Vladimir Gotal, objavila je nosač zvuka sa snimkom toga koncerta.

## BACHOVA MUKA PO MATEJU, BWV 244

*Matthäuspension, BWV 244, Muka po Mateju*, jedno je od stotinu djela duhovne, sakralne glazbe koja je Johann Sebastian Bach (1685. – 1750.) skladao za vrijeme službe u crkvi sv. Tome u Leipzigu, u kojoj je 1723. godine imenovan za *Thomaskantora*. Bach je bio jedan u nizu skladatelja na toj doista

važnoj dužnosti unutar luteranskog učilišta i crkve u Leipzigu.

Službeni povijesni naslov *Thomaskantor*, Cantor ili Director Musicae, opisuje dvije dužnosti: kantora ili direktora. Kao kantor, uvijekavao je zbor za službu u četirima luteranskim crkvama u Leipzigu, crkvi sv. Tome, crkvi sv. Nikole, novoj crkvi i crkvi sv. Petra. Kao direktor, organizirao je glazbu za gradske svečanosti. Uz to, bio je vezan i uz sveučilište u crkvi sv. Pavla. U povijesti dužnosti *Thomaskantora* upravo je J. S. Bach najslavniji, a obnašao ju je od 1723. do smrti 1750. godine.

Kao tekst koristio je Bach uglavnom priču o Kristovoj mucii i razapinjanju na križ iz Evanđelja koje je kao zapise ostavio Matej, jedan od Isusovih dvanaest apostola i jedan od četvorice evanđelista (uz Mateja to su još Ivan, Marko i Luka). Međutim, stvarne su stihove napisali Bachovi suvremenici, pjesnici, od kojih je glavni bio pjesnik Christian Friedrich Henrici (1700. – 1764.), koji je pisao pod imenom Picander.

Bachova *Muka po Mateju* podijeljena je u dva dijela. Prvi dio opisuje izdaju Isusa Krista, posljednju večeru te njegovu molitvu i uhićenje u Getsemanskom vrtu. Drugi dio predstavlja ostatak biblijske priče uključujući razapinjanje na križ, Kristovu smrt i polaganje u grob. Glazbeno su u ukupno 68 sekcija više istaknuti solisti, sopran, alt, tenor i bas, a nešto manje zbor, iako je i zboru Bach posvetio neke od osobito dojmljivih fragmenata. Kod solističkih vokalnih dionica vrlo je često riječ o duetima, ali ne s drugim glasom, nego s pojedinim instrumentom iz orkestra.

J. S. Bach pisao je *Muku po Mateju* za Veliki petak 1727. godine, pa je prva izvedba bila 11. travnja u crkvi sv. Tome u Leipzigu. Doista, nije naodmet pokušaj evokacije vremena, mjesta i sudionika praizvedbe tog remek-djela barokne glazbe. Jer, prije sada već 300 godina, u razdoblju bez struje i drugih nama danas poznatih i dostupnih životnih olakšica, skromnom, nadasve pobožnom i crkvenoj službi odanom kantoru na raspolaganju su bili mali mješoviti zbor i orkestar sastavljen od učenica i učenika škole sv. Tome, izvedbu je trebalo pripremiti brzo, pa se skladatelj poslužio nekim dijelovima iz prijašnjih partitura, a o „umjetničkom dojmu“ nije se ni razmišljalo. Bio je Veliki petak, a Kristova muka i razapinjanje na križ najtužniji su trenuci kršćanske vjere. Ali, upravo su to oni trenuci koji kršćaninu vjerniku ulijevaju snagu jer iza tragedije slijede uskrsnuće i ispunjenje obećanja Spasitelja svijeta.

*Muka po Mateju, BWV 244* J. S. Bacha pisana je prema oratorijskoj praksi vremena nastanka i uključuje lik Evanđelista (tenor), koji na način recitativa samo uz pratnju continua, recitativo secco, pripovijeda sadržaj iz Evanđelja. Solisti pjevaju različite uloge, uz lik Isusa (bas) uključeni su likovi



Jude i Petra, dvojice visokih svećenika (Pontifex I i II), Poncija Pilata, njegove žene (Uxor Pilati), dvojice svjedoka (Testis I i II) i dviju sluškinja. Isusove riječi (Vox Christi) prate posebni postupci jer ih uz continuo prati i gudačka sekcija, pa je to tzv. *recitativo accompagnato*, u kojem su pojedine riječi efektno dodatno naglašene zvukom gudača. Taj „halo-efekt“ izostaje tek u dramatičnom trenutku kad Isus na aramejskom jeziku izgovara riječi *Eli, Eli, lama asabthani?* („Bože moj, Bože moj, zašto si me ostavio?“).

Uopće, analiza Bachovih skladateljskih postupaka tražila bi mnogo više prostora. Svi dodatni efekti u rasporedu solističkih dionica i zbornih uključivanja, zbora koji kao *turba*, masa, komentira i nadopunjuje tijekom „radnje“ koristeći već poznate koralne melodije, napose korištenje za baroknu skladateljsku praksu karakterističnih *madrigalizama*, onomatopejskih postupaka koji glazbom evociraju značenja riječi, primjerice kromatike u melodiji i smanjenih septakorda u harmonija kod riječi „razapeti“, „ubiti“, „tugovati“, ili pak iznenadnih modulacija iz tonaliteta u tonalitet, svi ti skladateljski „trikovi“ imali su temeljnu funkciju koju je moguće opisati kao namjeru isticanja tragedije Kristove muke, ali i velike nade u spas duše omogućen Kristovim uskrnućem.

Glazba *Muke po Mateju, BWV 244* J. S. Bacha zacijelo je itekako dirnula njegove suvremenike kad su je prvi put čuli. Poznato je da je djelo izvedeno nekoliko puta za vrijeme Bachova života, skladatelj je prerađivao djelo, a sačuvan je i njegov rukopis. Sačuvani su dokazi o izvedbama i nakon Bachova života do 1800. godine.

Tad je nastupio muk. Sve do 1829. godine Bachova *Muka po Mateju* nije bila izvedena ni u Leipzigu ni igdje drugdje. Srećom je mladi Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809. – 1847.), 1824. godine star tek 15 godina, dobio na poklon partituru. Genijalan kakav je bio, prepoznao je veličinu djela i pokrenuo pripreme za izvedbu u Berlinu. Do izvedbe je došlo, ali tek u ožujku 1829. godine sa Singakademie, kojom je ravnao Felix Mendelssohn. I dok je na praznim pjevalo tek desetak Bachovih učenika, Singakademie je osigurala izvedbu s oko 150 pjevača. Velebnost, iznimnost, jedinstvenost, uzvišenost, duhovnost, pojmovi su koje vezemo uz Bachovu *Muku po Mateju*. Sad to grandiozno djelo možemo slušati i u jednoj od uspjelih izvedbi u varaždinskoj katedrali.

Hvala svima uključenima!

**Bach's Anthological *St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244* in an outstanding rendition  
at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Varaždin Baroque Evenings**

**Ivana Lazar, soprano  
Tia Pikija, soprano  
Sonja Runje, mezzo-soprano  
Hugo Hymas, tenor  
Franko Klisović, countertenor  
Emanuel Tomljenović, tenor  
Grga Peroš, baritone  
Krešimir Stražanac, bass  
Mixed choir Chorus Angelicus Varaždin  
Children's choir of the Music School in Varaždin  
Capella Savaria  
Anđelko Igréc, conductor**

On the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Varaždin Diocese, on September 28, 2022, as part of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Varaždin Baroque Evenings festival, the anthological *St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244* by Johann Sebastian Bach was performed in the Varaždin Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven. The grandeur of this unique masterpiece of spiritual music, whose performance lasts almost three hours, is an exceptional music event that the Varaždin audience has already had the opportunity to experience. However, the latest interpretation of this "musical cathedral" which came from the pen of one of the greatest composer minds in the history of humanity has been recorded for future generations thanks to the tireless follower of musical events in Varaždin, the former editor and sound engineer at Radio Varaždin, Vladimir Gotal. It remains as a lasting memory for everyone who heard the performance, as well as for future generations of baroque music lovers.

Indeed, happy is the city, happy is the festival and its visitors who are offered opportunities to get to know the greatest achievements in the art of composing. And happy are the musicians, performers, as well as their future listeners, who will be able to replay the music renditions which were made

immortal on the sound carriers of the *Aulos* Association, founded by Vladimir Gotal. Already a very rich discographic archive of this Varaždin association is now joined by this latest album with a recording of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* from the mentioned concert, which celebrated the existence of the Seat of the Varaždin Diocese, established by Pope John Paul II on July 5, 1997, and which was headed by Bishop Msgr Bože Radoš at the time of the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The performance of the magnificent *St. Matthew Passion* requires involvement of a substantial-size performing ensemble. In addition to all the aforementioned blessings that fall upon Varaždin, it is certainly worth adding the blessing of the existence of the Music School in Varaždin, where young talents are educated; as well as the fact of the centuries-old tradition of organizing and nurturing amateur choral singing in Varaždin. It is precisely on these foundations of the city's musical culture that many school and amateur choirs have grown. One of them is the Mixed Choir *Chorus Angelicus*, an oratorio choir founded in 1999 by the academic conductor, composer, and organist Anđelko Igrec. The choir initially operated within the Varaždin Cathedral and since 2018 has functioned as an association of citizens which brings together professional and amateur singers of all age groups. Among many other achievements in the rich European heritage of great oratorio works that *Chorus Angelicus* always successfully performs, a special place is undoubtedly taken by the demanding task set before the choir in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*.

Maestro Anđelko Igrec is happy to collaborate with the excellent Hungarian orchestra Capella Savaria and thanks to the high standards he follows when preparing a new piece, he consistently selects capable and reputable vocal soloists. Alongside the soprano Ivana Lazar, soprano Tia Pikiĵa, mezzo-soprano Sonja Runje, tenor Hugo Hymas, countertenor Franko Klisović, tenor Emanuel Tomljenović, baritone Grga Peroš and bass Krešimir Stražanac were engaged. Listeners will have opportunity to enjoy the quality of the singers in the triple album with the performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, *BWV 244*, which took place in the Varaždin Cathedral on September 28, 2022.

## MUSICAL SETTINGS OF CHRIST'S PASSION

Setting to music the texts about Christ's passion and crucifixion, whether taken from the Bible or their poetic adaptations, has a very long history. The theme has occupied composers ever since the

4<sup>th</sup> century after Christ's birth, from Gregorian plainchants to complex works for soloists, choir, and orchestra. Musical pieces were mostly composed to texts in Latin, and in the Middle Ages, the texts were often adapted for narratives involving multiple characters in the form of musical dramas. With gradual expansions and increasing complexity of musical structures, especially after the introduction of polyphony, musical evocations of the Christ's passion and crucifixion gained ever more complex characteristics.

Particular interest in the theme of the passion of Christ can be found among German composers during the Baroque period, especially among those who belonged to the Protestant Reformation. Among German composers, one of the first and most popular compositions of *Passion* was composed by Johann Walther (1495 - 1570), a contemporary and direct collaborator of Martin Luther (1483 - 1546). Of course, this is not the time to delve into the long and rich history and tradition of composing Passions as a vocal-instrumental spiritual musical form. However, it is important to bear in mind that within the church year calendar, which differs from the secular calendar and is determined by two major Christian holidays, Christmas and Easter, it was necessary to provide larger musical works as a spiritual contribution to the celebration and musical enrichment of the church service. During the preparations for Easter, the period of Lent, as a penitential preparation for Easter, special liturgical time which invites Christians to prayer, penance and doing good deeds, Good Friday is especially emphasized. It is the day of Jesus' passion and death when a ritual evoking Christ's passion takes place. The ritual is usually, held at the time of Jesus' death on the cross, around three o'clock in the afternoon. It was precisely for the Good Friday ritual that magnificent vocal-instrumental works were created by J. S. Bach, his Passions, of which today the most performed ones are the *St. John Passion, BWV 245*, and the *St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244*, not exclusively within the framework of Good Friday and, of course, not exclusively in church settings.

Bach's *St. John Passion, BWV 245*, was performed by the Varaždin Cathedral Choir *Chorus Angelicus* and the Croatian Baroque Ensemble with soloists Hugo Hymas, Ivana Lazar, Martina Bors, Dejan Maksimilijan Vrbanić, Krešimir Stražanac and Matija Meić under the direction of Anđelko Igrac on October 1, 2016, as part of the 46th Varaždin Baroque Evenings. A sound recording of that concert was released by the Varaždin Association *Aulos*, which was founded and is led by Vladimir Gotal.

## BACH'S ST. MATTHEW PASSION, BWV 244

*Matthäuspassion, BWV 244, - St. Matthew Passion*, is one of a hundred works of spiritual, sacred music composed by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750) during his tenure at the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, where he was appointed *Thomaskantor* in 1723. Bach was one in a line of composers in this truly important position within the Lutheran school and church in Leipzig.

The official historical title *Thomaskantor*, Cantor, or Director Musicae describes two duties: the one of Kantor and of Director. As Kantor, he trained the choir for services in four Lutheran churches in Leipzig: St. Thomas Church, St. Nicholas Church, the New Church, and St. Peter's Church. As Director, he organized music for the city festivities. Additionally, he was associated with the University at St. Paul's Church. In the history of the *Thomaskantor* position, J. S. Bach is the most famous, and he held it from 1723 until his death in 1750.

He used the text which tells the story of Christ's passion and crucifixion primarily from the Gospel written and bestowed to us by Matthew, one of the Jesus' twelve disciples and one of the four evangelists (along with Matthew there are also John, Mark and Luke). However, the actual lyrics were written by Bach's contemporaries, poets, among whom the main one was the poet Christian Friedrich Henrici (1700 - 1764), who wrote under the pen-name Picander.

Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* is divided into two parts. The first part describes the betrayal of Jesus Christ, the Last Supper, His prayer, and arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. The second part presents the rest of the biblical story, including the crucifixion, the death of Christ, and laying Him in the grave. Musically, there are 68 sections in total, with soloists, soprano, alto, tenor and bass, being more prominent, while the choir, although Bach dedicated some particularly impressive fragments to it, plays a somewhat smaller role. In the solo vocal sections, there are often duets, however not with another voice, but rather with individual instruments in the orchestra.

J. S. Bach composed the *St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244*, for Good Friday in 1727, and its first performance was on 11 April in the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig. Indeed, it is worth attempting to evoke the time, place and participants of the premiere of this masterpiece of baroque music, especially considering the circumstances of the time, now already 300 years ago, a time without electricity and other available conveniences we know today. Bach, a modest, devout and deeply religious cantor dedicated to his church service, had at his disposal a small mixed choir and an orchestra composed of

male and female students from St. Thomas School. The performance had to be prepared quickly, so the composer used some parts from his previous scores, and the concept of “artistic impression” was not even considered. It was Good Friday, the saddest moments of the Christian faith, marked by Jesus’ passion and crucifixion. But, it is precisely these moments that fill Christian believers with strength, because after the tragedy follows resurrection and the fulfillment of the Saviour of the world’s promise.

Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*, BWV 244, was written in accordance with the oratorio practice at the time of its creation, therefore it includes the character of the Evangelist (tenor), who narrates the contents from the Gospel in the form of recitative only with the continuo accompaniment, known as *recitativo secco*. Soloists sing various roles, which, along with the role of Jesus (bass), include Judas, Peter, two high priests (Pontifex I and II), Pontius Pilate, his wife (Uxor Pilati), two witnesses (Testis I and II) and two maidservants. Jesus’ words (Vox Christi) are accompanied by special procedures, as they are accompanied by the string section in addition to the continuo, making it a *recitativo accompagnato*, in which certain words are impressively additionally emphasized by the sound of the strings. This “halo effect” is only absent in the dramatic moment when Jesus, in Aramaic, utters the words *Eli, Eli, lama asabthani?* (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).

An in-depth analysis of Bach’s compositional techniques would require much more space. All the additional effects in the arrangement of solo sections and choral inclusions, where the choir, as a *turba*, a crowd, comments on and complements the course of the “plot” using well-known chorale melodies, and in particular using Baroque music characteristic, *madrigalisms*, onomatopoeic techniques that use music to evoke the meaning of words, for example, chromaticism in melody and reduced septachords in harmony for words like “crucified,” “killed,” “mourn,” or sudden modulations from one key to another -all of these compositional “tricks” had the fundamental function which can be described as an intention to highlight the tragedy of Christ’s passion and, at the same time, the great hope of salvation of the soul through Christ’s resurrection.

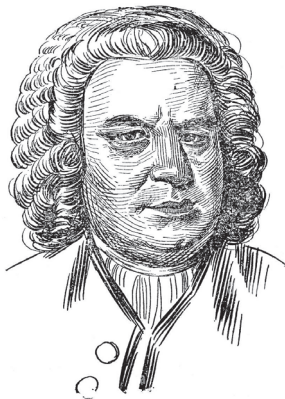
The music of *Bach’s St. Matthew Passion*, BW. 244, certainly deeply moved his contemporaries when they first heard it. It is known that the piece was performed several times during Bach’s lifetime. The composer revised the work and his manuscript is also preserved. There is evidence of performances even after Bach’s death, until 1800.

Then there was silence. Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* was not performed in Leipzig or anywhere else until 1829. Fortunately, young Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809 - 1847), being only at the age of

15, in 1824, received the score as a gift. Being a genius himself, he recognized the greatness of the work and initiated preparations for a performance in Berlin. The performance took place as late as March 1829 with the Singakademie, conducted by Felix Mendelssohn. While the premiere had only about ten of Bach's students singing, the Singakademie ensured a performance with around 150 singers. Grandeur, uniqueness, distinctiveness, sublimity and spirituality are terms associated with Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*. Now, this grand work can be listened to in one of the successful renditions in the Varaždin Cathedral.

Thanks to all involved!

Zdenka Weber PhD



AULOS: AUDIO ARHIVA VARAŽDINSKIH BAROKNIH VEČERI - KOLEKCIJA BR. 26

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH  
**MUKA PO MATEJU**  
MATTHÄUS-PASSION  
BWV 244



Nakladnik: Aulos Varaždin · Sunakladnik: Chorus angelicus i Konc. ured  
Tonski snimatelj: Vladimir Gotal · Mastering: Božidar Pandurić  
Tekst: Zdenka Weber · Prijevod: Irena Žiger  
Cover: Karla Kelemen · Urednik- producent: Vladimir Gotal