

Ullrich Böhme, Thomasorganist

Rodney Gehrke, Organist

Playing on:

Wilhelm Sauer Organ (1889)

Gerald Woehl "Bach Organ" (2000)

PROGRAM

I

Prelude & Fugue in C major, BWV 545

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

II

Selig sind, die da Leid tragen
aus dem "Deutschen Requiem,"
für Orgel bearbeitet von W. Phillips

Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897)

III

Three "Leipzig Chorales":

An Wasserflüssen Babylon, BWV 653

Trio Super: Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend, BWV 655

Trio Super: Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr, BWV 664

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

IV

Prelude in G Major, Opus 37, Number 2: Andante Con Moto

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809 – 1847)

V

Prelude and Fugue in Eb major, BWV 552
(from "Clavierübung III")

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)



The Organists

Ullrich Böhme was born in 1956 in the Vogtland area of Saxony. He assumed the position of organist in his home town of Rothenkirchen at the age of 13. From that time on he retained his fascination with the “King of Instruments.” He studied with Hans Otto at the Dresden Church Music Academy and then at the Leipzig Conservatory with Wolfgang Schetelich. He then assumed the position of Cantor and Organist at the Church of the Holy Cross (Kreuzkirche) in Chemnitz.

In the Bach anniversary year 1985 (300 years after Bach’s birth) Ullrich Böhme was chosen from among many applicants for the position of Organist at Leipzig’s famous St. Thomas Church (*Thomaskirche*), the church where Johann Sebastian Bach worked for the final 27 years of his life. Since that time Böhme’s principal responsibilities have included solo organ work at the services of St. Thomas Church, concerts, and performances at the regular *Motetten* (evening choral services) with the venerable boy choir at St. Thomas Church (*Thomanerchor*), as well as playing continuo for cantatas, oratorios, and passions. In addition he has made regular concert tours to many European countries, to North America, and to Japan. He has made numerous recordings on compact disk, and for radio and television productions, both in Germany and abroad. He has been invited to serve on the juries of significant international organ competitions and in 1989 received the Critics’ Prize of the Cultural Journalists of Leipzig.

Mr. Böhme provided the impetus for the restoration of the large Romantic organ by Wilhelm Sauer at St. Thomas Church. He then developed the concept of a new Bach Organ. for St. Thomas Church, replacing a modern neo-Baroque organ in a side gallery of the church. This new instrument was dedicated in June 2000. Installation of this organ coincided with the worldwide celebration of the 250th anniversary of Bach’s death. The focal point of the global celebration was the official *Bach 2000* festival held in Leipzig in July. *Bach 2000* celebrated the completion of the restoration of St. Thomas Church (interior, exterior, and stained glass windows), and comprised ten days of concerts by distinguished musicians from around the world, lectures on Bach related topics, excursions to hear historic organs from Bach’s day, and chamber concerts at historical sites in the area.

Ullrich Böhme is active as advisor to organ restoration projects such as that of the superb Hildebrandt organ of St. Wenceslas Church in Naumburg. A professor since 1994 at the Leipzig Conservatory of Music and Drama, he teaches masterclasses in interpretation in Germany and abroad.

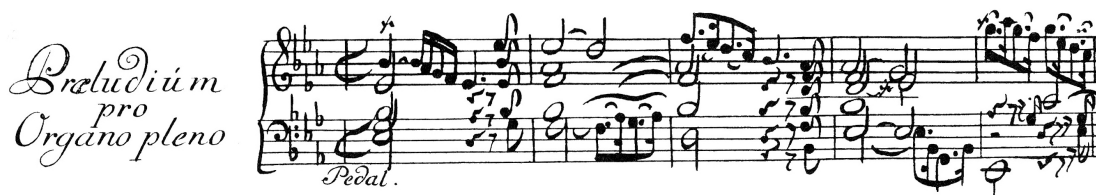
Rodney Gehrke is Director of Music at All Saints’ Episcopal Church, Palo Alto, organist and choir director at San Francisco’s Temple Emanu-El, professor of organ at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and undergraduate organ instructor at the University of California, Berkeley.

Mr. Gehrke has performed and recorded with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and has also made two recordings of Mexican Baroque music with Chanticleer, with whom he toured the Southwest and Mexico in 1998. More recently he has performed with the American Bach Soloists as continuo organist and harpsichordist. He has also been heard with the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players and the conservatory’s Blueprint Festival.

He can be heard on the CD collection “Historic Organs of San Francisco,” a performance recorded in 1988 at the gala concluding recital of the *Organ Historical Society* (OHS) convention in San Francisco on the historic 1905 Los Angeles Art Organ (Murray Harris) in Temple Sherith Israel, where Mr. Gehrke served as organist and choir director from 1986 to 2006 and also supervised the first re-leathering of the virtually untouched instrument.

He also appears on the OHS collection “Historic Organs of Seattle” (2008), recorded on the Brombaugh organ at Christ Episcopal Church, Tacoma, Washington. In 1985, he performed the complete organ works of J.S. Bach in 12 recitals in Bach’s 300th birthday year. At this church, St. Mark’s Lutheran, San Francisco, where he served as Director of Music and Liturgy for 29 years, he successfully supervised the 17-year process leading to the installation in 2006 of the first Taylor & Boody tracker organ west of Iowa, a 29-stop instrument.

His first organ teacher was his father, Hugo Gehrke. He also studied with Arno Schoenstedt of Herford, Germany, David Dahl at Pacific Lutheran University, Lawrence Moe at the University of California, Berkeley, and Harald Vogel of the North German Organ Academy. He holds an M.A. in musicology from the University of California, Berkeley.



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