

**Notes from
Irene Stroh's Bach Ciaccona for Solo Violin:
Hidden Chorales and Messages
Ball State University, May 2011**



Chronology

1717-1723 – J. S. Bach in Cöthen (court musician, not organist/choirmaster, focus on secular music)

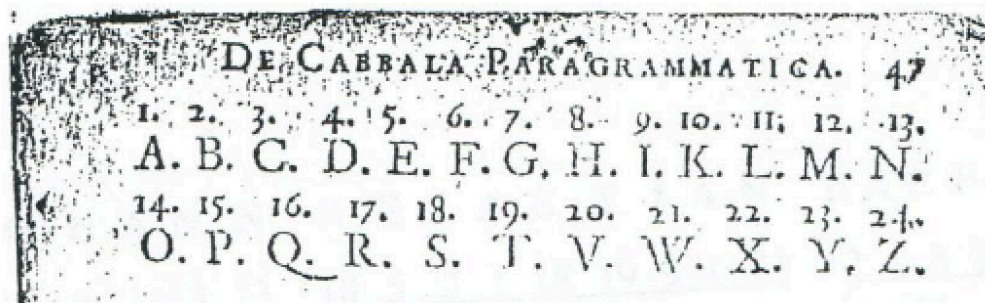
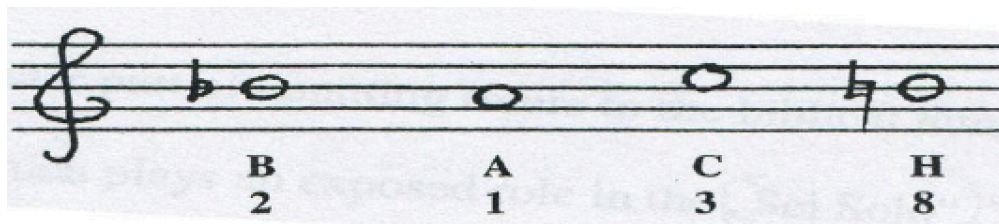
1720 – death of first wife Maria Barbara Bach (1684-1720)

1720 – composition of all six works for solo violin (3 sonatas, 3 partitas)

The Partita in d minor BMV1004 was written soon after the death of his wife and is written as a memorial to her.

Two Types of Hidden Messages

I. **Gematria** (putting letters into numbers, which equal the order of the alphabet letters)



J O H A N N S E B A S T I A N B A C H
 9 14 8 1 13 13 18 5 2 1 18 19 9 1 13 2 1 3 8
 58 86 14 = 158

7 1 7 33 7 5 33 33 7 7 2 4 7
 158

2. Hiding chorales within the texture of the chaconne that reinforce its meaning.

Violin

S

Voices A

Christ lag in To - des Ban - den

T

Christ lag Christ lag

Part I (mm. 1-131) d minor

1. Christ lag in Todesbanden (Christ lay in death's bonds)
2. Dein Will gescheh, Herr Gott, zugleich (Your will be done)
3. Befiel du deine Wege (Commit your path.)
4. Wo soll ich fliehen hin (Where shall I flee)
5. Auf meinen lieben Gott (In my dear God, I trust)
6. Jesu, meine Freude (Jesus, my joy)

Part II (mm. 132 – 207) D Major

7. Vom Himmel Hoch (From Heaven above)
8. Jesu, deine Passion will ich jetzt bedenken (Jesus, I will ponder now on the thy holy Passon)
9. Wie soll is dich empfangen
10. In meines Herzens Grunde (In the bottom of my heart)
11. Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren (Now praise, my soul, the Lord)

Part III (repetitions from earlier chorales) (mm. 208 – 256) d minor

11. Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren (Now praise, my soul, the Lord)
2. Dein Will gescheh, Herr Gott, zugleich (Your will be done)
1. Christ lag in Todesbanden (Christ lay in death's bonds)

Online

Bach Chaconne from Partita No. 2 in d minor, BWV 1004

Jascha Heifetz – www.youtube.com/watch?v=6q-Zqz7mNjQ

Hilary Hahn - www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqA3qQMKueA

Isaac Stern - www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zvRWFD_1_M

Joshua Bell - www.youtube.com/watch?v=myXOrVv-fNk

Poppen; The Hilliard Ensemble) - J S Bach - Ciaccona BWV 1004

accompanied by chorale fragments

(www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5D23cmVV04)

Suggested Reading

Boyd, Malcolm. *Bach the Master Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie. NY: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Braatz, Thomas, and Aryeh Oron. "Chorale Melodies used in Bach's Vocal Works." www.bach-cantatas.com/CM/Wo-soll-ich-fliehen-hin.htm.

———"Emmanuel Music." Accessed March 10, 2011.

www.emmanuelmusic.org/notes_translations/nt_notes_transl_cantatas.htm#pab1_7

Thoene, Helga. *Johann Sebastian Bach Ciaccona. Tanz oder Tombeau* [Dance or Tombeau]. Oschersleben: dr.Ziethen Verlag, 2009.