

# Harpsichord & *fortepiano*

Vol. 19, No. 1    Autumn, 2014

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Musical Instrument Research Catalog  
(MIRCAt)

# C.P.E. BACH AT 300

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*On 8 March 2014 CPE turned 300 and his birthday celebrations were numerous.*

## **In London and rest of the UK**

In 2011, Roger Norrington Conducted the OAE in an all-CPE Bach programme at the Southbank Centre, London on 3 March. The Other Amazing Mr Bach, a study day, was held at the Purcell Room on 5 March 2011 with Sara Mohr-Pietsch; Susan Wollenberg (Univ. Oxford); and Rachel Baldock (Royal Academy of Music).

*Florilegium* gave a performance on 6 March 2014 at The Wigmore Hall, London. The programme included a string symphony, solo flute sonata, quartet, trio sonata and the concerto for harpsichord, fortepiano and orchestra with soloists Geoffrey Govier and Terence Charlston. In London on 21 March 2014 Mahan Esfahani joined Jane Gordon (dir) and Steinitz Bach Players in a programme of solos and concertos.

The London Bach Society is celebrating 1-14 November 2014 with *Bachfest* which includes a tribute to the Georgian Bach-Abel subscription concerts of 18th century London. Most concerts will take place in St. George's Church Hanover Square, London. These commemorate the concerts run by J.C. Bach.

In April 2014, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and BBC Singers performed CPE Bach's St John Passion, directed by Ukrainian conductor Kirill Karabits, who edited the manuscript which was previously kept by the Sing-Akademie zu Berlin and recently re-surfaced in a Kiev archive. In April 2014, Thomas Trotter gave an organ recital at Birmingham Town Hall, performing three sonatas alongside shorter items.

**In the U.S.** several celebrations were planned. The Packard Humanities Institute published "The Essential C.P.E. Bach", an anthology of 25 works excerpted from their complete works edition. From 5-9 February 2014 CPE Bach and Haydn concerts were performed by Robert Levin and

Ya-Fei Chuang with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra Stanford, *San Francisco, and Berkeley, California.*

Zumbro Lutheran Church in Rochester, Minnesota, USA welcomed Wilbert Hazelzet and Jacques Ogg (director) performing with Lyra Baroque Orchestra for a birthday concert on 7 March 2014. On 15 March the Albany based Empire Baroque gave a recital at the College of St Rose, Albany, NY. On 28 March 2014, The Harvard University Choir and the Harvard Baroque Chamber Orchestra presented a performance of C.P.E. Bach's *Die Israeliten in der Wüste*. In addition, Harvard libraries held two exhibitions from January 2014 through April 2014. The first, held in the Houghton Library, was entitled Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788): The Intellectual and Musical Life and Legacy of an Original Genius' and covered service at the court of Frederick the Great, links with authors, his important keyboard treatise, and his reputation both during his lifetime and after; the second was 'Editing C.P.E. Bach's Complete Works' and was held at the Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library.

On Saturday, October 18, 2014, Kenneth Cooper and ensemble performed for the Berkshire Bach Society in South Egremont, Massachusetts, USA.

The Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY features three concerts dedicated to C. P. E. Bach during the week of November 10, 2014. *Con Gioia*, directed by Preethi de Silva, and based in Los Angeles, is devoting the two seasons to concerts of chamber music and solo keyboard and orchestral works by the CPE Bach in 2014.

**In Australia and New Zealand**, the commonwealth link included some names of note.

On 15 August 2014 in the Victoria Concert Hall Chamber Series, Singapore, Peter Hanson, violinist

gave a recital featuring CPE Bach works alongside those of his father. On 16 August 2014, Holly Mathieson, conductor; David Burchell, harpsichord; and John van Buskirk, fortepiano performed CPE Bach: *Double Concerto for Harpsichord and Fortepiano* alongside Richard Strauss: *Suite Op. 4* (for Strauss's 150 year birthday). This was for Southern Sinfonia, New Zealand.

Sydney Opera house will have a birthday concert in December 2014 with Catherine MacKintosh, leading from the violin, with the Australian Haydn Ensemble (Erin Helyard, director) and with soloists Neal Peres Da Costa, fortepiano and Daniel Yeadon, cello. Helyard also performed a solo concert at the University of Wellington, New Zealand in May 2014.

In Kuopio, **Finland**, the third Nordic Historical Keyboard Festival was held 13-22 August 2014 and included recitals by Aapo Häkkinen (Finland), Shuann Chai (U.S.A./Netherlands) and Norberto Brogini (Argentina).

The **German and Swiss Clavichord Societies** held a joint event, the Clavichortage in Bad Krozingen from 2-5 October 2014. This featured recitals by Mathieu Dupouy, and Enno Kastens focussing on C.P.E. Bach; a recital by Stefan Müller on influences leading to Beethoven, and one by Jermain Sprosse organised around the music of W.F. Bach. In addition the Dutch Clavichord Society issue part 3 of a series of article on C.P.E. Bach by Miklós Spányi.



*Painting:*  
Franz Conrad Löhrl (1735–1812)[1], C.P.E. Bach, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, M.589, public domain

The real “pride of place” of course was reserved for the towns in Germany where CPE Bach lived. It is interesting to consider the programming. Most places did have plenty of historically informed presentations but noted are the few standouts where it seems the modern piano (and other modern instruments) had to take its place. **Weimar**, the town of C.P.E. Bach's birth, holds a Biennale. As this town is also essentially important to the life of J.S. Bach the two are inexorably intertwined. The Neue Bach-Gesellschaft held a Bachfest in to celebrate J.S. and C.P.E. Bach as part of the *Thüringer Bachwochen* festival (3 April to 4 May).

On the birthday there were eight concerts throughout the day at the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul, The Hochschule Franz Liszt, and the Scheissshaus. These include cantatas, coffee-house concerts, and concertos (albeit with modern piano). On 30 April the *Bachfest Weimar* began, which included J.S. Bach's Easter Oratorio and *Magnificat*, Easter music by CPE Bach, and other instrumental works. There were further concerts at the Fürstenhaus and a symposium on the theme of “Between the times; the Bach sons”; the Bach family (with chamber music directed by Rinaldo Alessandrini); Bach and sons (with many concerti performed by the Freiburger Barokorchester at the Weimarhalle); and a final concert featuring J.S. Bach's Ascension oratorio and C.P.E. Bach's *Magnificat*. The building where CPE was born later housed Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner, Felix Mendelssohn, Berlioz, Paganini, and Carl Maria von Weber, so it is a house steeped in music history.

**Leipzig**, home to the Bach family and J.S. Bach's burial place, was a place of new beginnings for C.P.E. Bach, who had lost his mother and gained a stepmother only three years previously. It was also the place where he received much of his serious musical education, becoming a fixture at the Thomasschule and Collegium Musicum, and later from the age of 15, serving as his father's scribe. Many of his and his brother's

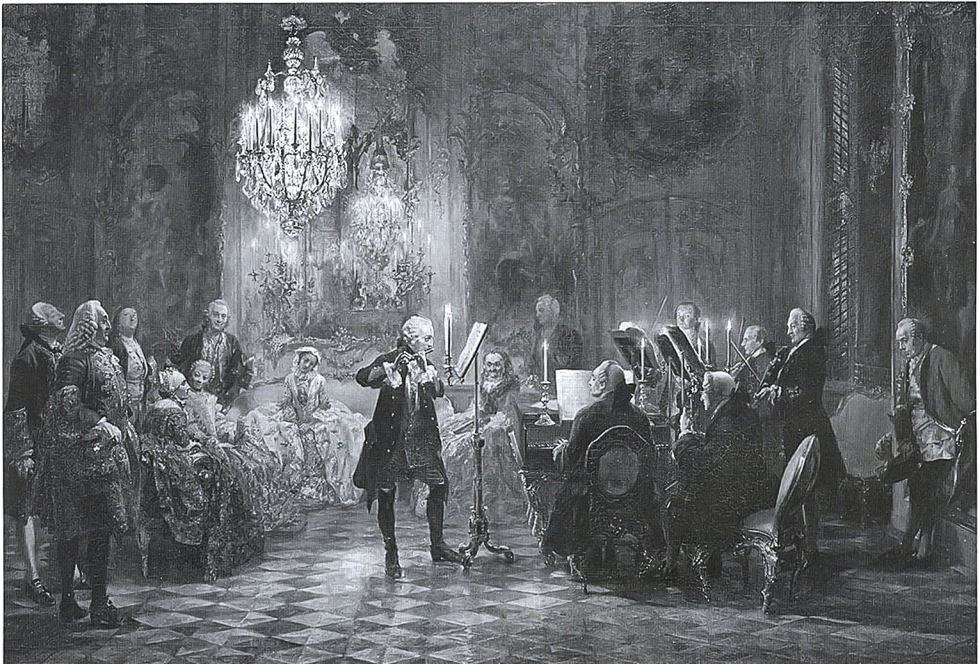


compositions from this period are written in the Anna Magdalena Notenbuch 1725. To celebrate his 300th birthday, Leipzig held a symposium on conflict in culture which included Christopher Hogwood, Peter Wollny and others, as well as a concert of Motets by the Thomanenchor Leipzig. On the birthday itself Capella Thuringia (Bernhard Klapprott, director) performed cantatas; the next day late string quartets (including Ludger Remy) were performed. The *Bach-Fest Leipzig* took place 13–22 June 2014.

In **Frankfurt (Oder)**, where C.P.E. carried out his early university studies for law (which was a common route for musicians who might seek a court post) and began doing the things most aspiring musicians do – teaching, composing, and performing a lot. A concert hall was named for

C.P.E. Bach in 1970. The Musikgesellschaft C. P. E. Bach Frankfurt (Oder) e.V. is dedicated to publicising the life and work of Bach, hosting chamber concerts and publishing research in the “Bach-Konzepte” periodicals, as well as supervising the sole existing permanent C.P.E. Bach exhibition. A recent discovery reveals the city’s most prominent citizen, Heinrich von Kleist, to be the grand-nephew of Ewald Christian von Kleist, whose poems C.P.E. Bach set to music.

The jubilee year began with an opening concert on 15 Dec 2013 on the 225th anniversary of C.P.E. Bach’s death. Then in March the Kammerorchester Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, conducted by Hartmut Hänchen, made an appearance (on tour obviously) performing Bach and Mozart, with soloists who were winners of the



Painting: Adolph Menzel (1815-1905), “Flötenkonzert Friedrichs des Großen in Sanssouci”, 1852, public domain. Frederick the Great plays flute; C.P.E. Bach is at the keyboard. A full list of personages is as follows:

*Mitte: Friedrich der Große; ganz rechts: Johann Joachim Quantz, des Königs Flötenlehrer; links von ihm mit Violine im dunklen Rock: Franz Benda; ganz links im Vordergrund: Gustav Adolf von Gotter; hinter ihm: Jakob Friedrich Freiherr von Bielfeld; hinter ihm, an die Decke schauend: Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis; in Hintergrund auf dem rosa Sofa sitzend: Wilhelmine von Bayreuth; zu ihrer rechten: Amalie von Preußen mit einer Hofdame; hinter ihnen: Carl Heinrich Graun; alte Dame hinter dem Notenständer: Gräfin Camas; hinter ihr: Egmont von Chasôt; am Cembalo: Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach.*

international Johann-Sebastian-Bach competition Leipzig. Christine Schornsheim (harpsichord) again appeared as a soloist in a concerto, alongside a cello concerto and sinfonias. The final concert was on the birthday and featured *“Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Jesu”* (The Resurrection and Ascension Oratorio – sometimes termed The Easter Oratorio- for soloist, choir and orchestra Wq 204/ H 777. It was deemed to be the example of a new genre of oratorio designed to be performed in concert halls. Karl Wilhelm Ramler’s libretto contributed to this; there are missing chorales where they might be expected, possibly to keep a performing flow. (The original premiere was held in the “Concertsaal auf dem Kamp” in Hamburg.)

In **Berlin**, where C.P.E. was employed at the court of Frederick the Great, married and raised children, and published his important treatises, the Akademie für Alternmusik presented vocal works, quartets and works for flute and violin. Prussian Court music including Nichelmann, Gluck and C.P.E (however, using modern piano!) was also featured, while another included family and friends (Marcello, Vivaldi, and Telemann). Another concert featured children born in 1714 – including C.P.E. Bach, Gottfried August Homilius (who had the same teacher before working in Dresden in sacred music) and Gluck and Jommelli (opera composers, mainly). On the birthday itself, the Kammerorchester Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (looking a bit numerous in their press photo) performed the Passionskantate; the Berliner Philharmonie (looking less numerous in their picture) gave J.S. Bach’s “Musical Offering” alongside several of C.P.E. Bach’s sinfonias and concerti and with Kristian Bezuidenhout, fortepiano. The Matthew Passion also had an airing here, however it was confusingly listed as “Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach: St Matthew Passion 1769 by Johann Sebastian Bach”. It does seem difficult to separate the son from the father!

**Potsdam**, another important city for C.P.E. Bach, counts among its musical greats

Quantz, Schaffrath, the Benda brothers and Graun. The city seems to have impressive resources at its disposal, with some large staging of choral/orchestral works, and even an open-air concert. C.P.E.’s St Matthew Passion received a lecture and a performance, as well his Easter Oratorio. Many offerings showed Bach alongside other monumental composers, such as Mozart and Beethoven, or childhood prodigies such as C.P.E. Bach, Mozart and Mendelssohn. Their two day organ festival presented works of C.P.E. Bach, J.S. Bach, Mendelssohn (who lived in Leipzig and was important in revival of J.S. Bach’s music), Boëllmann and improvisers, presumably in a bid to show the great development of improvisation. One recital presented repertoire for the flute, but after only one token work by C.P.E. (and one by Frederick the Great) the rest were by Messiaen, Faure, Poulenc etc., and the works were unashamedly played by the modern flute.

**Hamburg**, where C.P.E. Bach succeeded his godfather Telemann as cantor in 1768, and the place of his death, featured concerts showing the influence of J.S. Bach and Mozart; comparisons of his work with half-brother Johann Christian (the London Bach) and W. F. Bach; concerts around the Hamburger school (Telemann) including some of the Hamburger sinfonien, the Prussian court (Graun, Benda, Nichelman); and a performance by Menno van Delft with Ensemble Schirokko/ Bell’Arte Salzburg in a programme chronicling C.P.E. Bach’s life through his own compositions. Of course in Hamburg the link with godfather Telemann was most relevant.

The University of Hamburg organised a symposium on “generationality” – showing influences in Hamburg on C.P.E. and from him to successive generations. The festival ended with a concert concerning C.P.E.’s godfather Telemann and with music in the crypt where CPE is buried – the concert including performances by harpsichordist Michael Fuerst.

There are two new museums (from renovated houses) in the Peterstrasse, near the church of

## Harpsichord & fortepiano



St Michael, where C.P.E. is buried. The new museums were dedicated to C.P.E. Bach and to Johann Adolf Hasse. This street is already nearby to museums for Brahms and Telemann, making this a "Composers Quarter". A second phase of development will see exhibitions relating to Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn and Gustav Mahler taking place in the same street, so the "Hamburg Bach" will not be alone.

For a family so close, C.P.E. Bach and his father J.S. Bach were probably the closest, especially as C.P.E. Bach was very much responsible for the stewardship and transmission of J.S. Bach's works. It is therefore fitting that he should be remembered both in this role and in his own right.

The inscription of the monument to CPE Bach at St Michael's Church, Hamburg has the following:

Steh hier nicht still, Nachahmer,  
Denn du mußt erröthen, wenn du bleibest,  
Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach,  
der tiefsinnige Harmonist,  
vereinte die Neuheit mit der Schönheit,  
war groß  
in der vom Worte geleiteten Musik  
größer  
in der kühnen, wortlosen,  
übertraf den Erfinder der Musik:  
denn er erhob die Kunst des Spiels,  
durch die Lehre und Ausübung,  
bis zu dem Vollendeten

Geb. 1714

Gest. 1788\*

\**Briefe und Dokumente*, edited by Ernst Suchalla, vol. 1-2, Göttingen, 1994/

Readers may like to view the family tree of C.P.E. Bach, from the website of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz <<http://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/dms/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN629531560>>

Other sources include <<http://www.cpebach.de/en/2014/weimar>> and <[www.cpebach.de/en/about-bach/biography](http://www.cpebach.de/en/about-bach/biography)>

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