

# Understanding BACH

## Editorial

Bach Network UK has had a full and eventful year. Within nine months of the launch of *Understanding Bach* in April 2006, the membership was approaching the two-hundred mark and we had outgrown the structures of our first website. We are delighted now to be publishing *Understanding Bach 2* on the new website, and we hope that the more user-friendly features will encourage members to visit the site regularly and post comments on the Discussion Boards, stimulated by the articles in *Understanding Bach* and reports from the Dialogue Meetings. Two topic-based research groups are at the early stages of development and results from these will also fuel the discussions and debates.

The content of *Understanding Bach 2* reflects the activities the trustees have undertaken on behalf of BNUK in the past twelve months. In May the American Bach Society (<http://www.americanbachsociety.org/Meetings/LeipzigMeeting.htm>) held its biennial meeting in Leipzig and it was here that Isabella van Elferen presented her research on public weeping and the concert hall. Since it complements the article presented by Andrew Stewart in *Understanding Bach 1*, we are very happy that Isabella van Elferen has allowed us to publish the full text in *Understanding Bach 2*. In July 2006 Yo Tomita and Szymon Paczkowski joined Reinhard Strohm and myself in a BNUK study session entitled 'New Bach Research' at the Twelfth Biennial International Conference on Baroque Music in Warsaw (<http://www.baroque-mus-conf.uw.edu.pl/>). It is an honour to be able to include Yo Tomita's important and timely source-based statement about Anna Magdalena's role as copyist, not least because of the sensational claims about Anna Magdalena circulated world-wide by the tabloid press earlier in 2006. Szymon Paczkowski's study of Bach's use of the much-neglected polonaise gives us a preview of results from a larger research project to be published in a forthcoming monograph on the Polish style in German music of the eighteenth century. The articles by Ian Cross and Christoph Wolff originate from the 2001 Oxford symposium 'Understanding Bach through Science, Art and Criticism'. Christoph Wolff's article develops the picture of Bach he presented in *Bach the Learned Musician* (1999), and which earned him a nomination for the 2001 Pulitzer Prize in biography. Ian Cross's exploration of computational modelling in Bach's music gives an insight into his experimental research into the perceptibility of

temporal structural events. My own article is a brief overview of a newly-formulated theory of Bach's revision procedure which will also be the basis of a forthcoming monograph. It was presented at the Dialogue meeting in December 2006.

The Dialogue meetings continue to be the most tangible public embodiment of BNUK. The Second Dialogue 'New Directions in Bach Studies' was held once more in Oxford hosted by the music department. The Christmas concert season was upon us when we met, but in spite of this thirty-six members were able to be present (see the report under Dialogue 2). The highly successful new format, devised by Larry Dreyfus and John Butt, enabled deep and informed discussion to continue long after the end of the timetabled sessions.

The structure of BNUK remains the same even as our activities expand. Since it is the small group of trustees who are the active executants, we are very happy to welcome Yo Tomita and Katie Pardee onto the team, and would like to thank Larry Dreyfus as he steps down for all he contributed to BNUK.

On behalf of the editorial board of *Understanding Bach* and the trustees of Bach Network UK, it is my pleasure to present this second volume of *Understanding Bach* to the membership, and, as always, we hope that the articles will enrich and stimulate new thinking about Bach, his world and his music.

Ruth Tatlow (Volume Editor)  
Stockholm, 21 March 2007