

"MOTETUS FOR J.S. BACH, VOICES & TAPE"

DEvised AND CONDUCTED BY ULRICH SUESSE

Bach wrote the motet "Jesu meine Freude" for the occasion of a funeral. That was 251 years ago. Since then this motet has been performed and recorded innumerable times in circumstances quite unrelated to its original purpose. Such a change is quite normal in art. Some commentators would call it change from 'Gebrauchsmusik' (functional music) to music for its own sake.

The motet "Jesu meine Freude" exemplifies this process in both ways: from Bach backwards to the beginning of Western music, and from Bach forward to today. To be more specific: Bach living in his time used long-established conventions such as harmonic and contrapuntal procedures, the "motet" idiom, Bible texts, or a melody published long before his time as a "chorale". He rethought and reframed them - partly changing their original meaning according to his needs and professional duties as Cantor in Leipzig. This rethinking is not at all unusual and by no means revolutionary. It is a process conditioned by changes in social structures, aesthetic values, or even technical performing conditions - and this applies to us as much as it applied to Bach.

Today we use the legacies of the past - such as this Bach motet - and partly change their original meaning. The original funeral music has become a free standing piece of music "literature". We perform it in churches, concert halls, or even in the open air. We often use different instrumentations

or bigger choirs with different colours (women's instead of boy's voices). The interpretation is different: for example, the speed is faster and there are more dramatic accents. We reinterpret the past in the light of the present: in his day Bach did likewise.

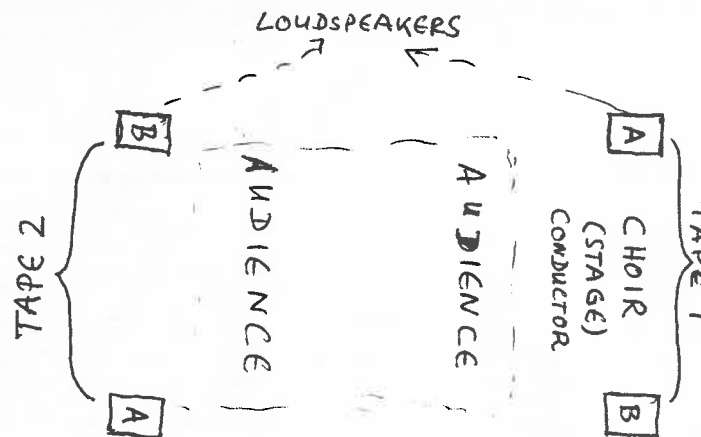
This performance combines the Bachmotet with several tapes. One of the tapes contains a lecture by the American composer, John Cage. Thus we are faced with a product that extends from the pre-Bach concept of the motet (le mot = the word), up to today - today, where a single tone isn't regarded only as (e.g.) a result of striking the key of a piano, but as a result of speeded-up impulses, and where many impulses are perceived as sound. The tape (live and electronic sounds) helps to bring ideas to the surface, assisting Cage or Bach, or else being independent. For example, Bach's extra rest on the word "nothing" is a different handling of the same idea by Cage, the idea of silence. The compositional technicality of a retrograde (the same melody backwards) can be easily demonstrated by reversing a tape section. The tape interacting with the choir yields shapes and lines or distorts them, making this distortion another quality to which the choir will react. The choir alone - a cappella - explores different aspects of the Chorale by keeping the pitches and changing the rhythm, or vice versa.

The aim is not to show a new Bach or an old Cage, but to make music today. Music in our century seems to have developed so fast beyond our concepts of understanding that we often find difficulty in keeping up with this development, whereas the jump in one century from the horse as a moving category to the jet plane is a "natural" and accepted phenomenon.

Ulrich Suesse

SOME DIRECTIONS AND EXPLANATIONS:

A 4 CHANNEL SYSTEM SHOULD BE USED WITH TWO STEREO FULL TRACK TAPERECORDERS. RECOMMENDED SET-UP:



NOTATION: THE CHOIR SINGS BASICALLY THE WHOLE MOTET; THIS SCORE INDICATES BACH'S SCORE BY USING MAINLY THE SOPRANO (OR ANY UPPER VOICE) LINE. SINCE THE RECORDING IS $\frac{1}{2}$ TONE LOWER ONE HAS TO IMAGINE THE SCORE ACCORDINGLY; THEREFORE THE TROMBONE PART (pg 8 and 9) IS WRITTEN IN E^b .

IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAND OUT PROGRAMNOTES (BACK OF THIS PAGE) TO THE AUDIENCE — SOME OF THE PRINTED WORDS RE-APPEAR ON TAPE.

TAPE 2

CHANNEL A

MOTETUS FOR J.S. BACH, VOICES & TAPE

PAGE 1
(CHORAL: "Jesu meine Freude")

Bach wrote the motet "Jesu meine Freude" for the occasion of a funeral. That was 251 years ago. Since then this motet has been performed and recorded innumerable times in circumstances quite unrelated to its original purpose. Such a change is quite normal in art. Some commentators would call it change from 'Gebrauchsmusik' (functional music) to music for its own sake.

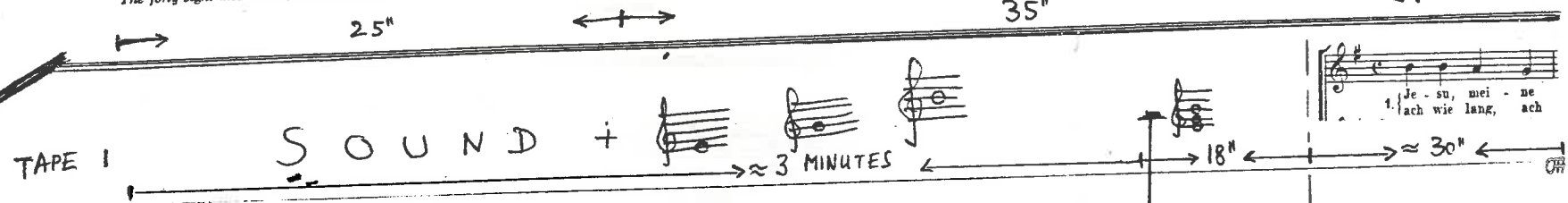
This performance combines the Bachmotet with several t
SOUND

printed in four columns to facilitate a rhythmic reading. Each line is to be read across the page from left to right, not down the columns in sequence. This should not be done in an artificial manner (which might result from an attempt to be too strictly faithful to the position of the words on the page), but with the rubato which one uses in everyday speech.

TAPE 1 ON

CHANNEL B

This lecture was printed in Incontri Musicali, August 1959. There are four measures in each line and twelve lines in each unit of the rhythmic structure. There are forty-eight such units, each having forty-eight measures. The whole is divided into five large parts, in the proportion 7, 6, 14, 14, 7. The forty-eight measures of each unit are likewise so divided. The text is



CHOIR 5-10" SOUND on any pitch, any vowel, (slow) changes from high to low, diminuendo, crescendo, from vowel to vowel (a-e-i-o-u ek)

go INTO →

SOPRANO
ALTO
TENOR
BASS

HOLD →

CHORAL .

1. Je - su, mei - ne
1. ach wie lang, ach

SING (with all 4 voices)
THE CHORALE PARALLEL
WITH TAPE. (TAPE STOPS
and comes in again)

TAPE CH A

2

CH B

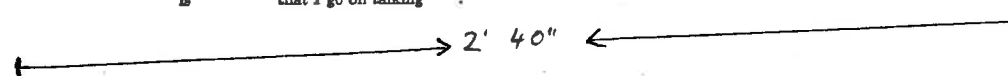
One of the tapes contains a lecture by the American composer, John Cage. Thus we are faced with a product that extends from the pre-Bach concept of the motet (le mot = the word), up to today - today, where a single tone isn't regarded only as (e.g.) a result of striking the key of a piano, but as a result of speeded-up impulses, and where many impulses are perceived as sound.

those who wish to get somewhere
any moment
silence is ; but what silence requires
that I go on talking

If among you are
let them leave at

What we re-quire

SOUND OFF



(TOTAL DURATION OF
PAGE 1 : ~ 5 MINUTES)

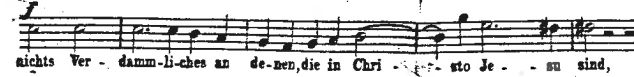
TAPE 1

ON OFF

CHOIR



SEVERAL TIMES (WITHIN
≈ 28") ANY COMBINATION
FROM ONE VOICE TO 5 VOICES



ON

now
words
silences

make

there are silences
help make

But
and the
the

This space of time

is organized

TAPE 2

poetry

and I am saying it

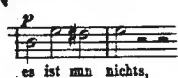
as I need it

I have nothing to say

and that is

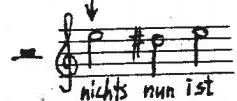
TAPE 1

ON



OFF

CHOIR



We need not fear these silences, we may love them

talk

just as I make

for I am making it
a piece of music.

This is a composed

OFF

TAPE 2

CHOIR



TAPE 1

ON
CHA

What I admired in

Bach

was the way

many things

went together

As I keep on

re-mem-bering,

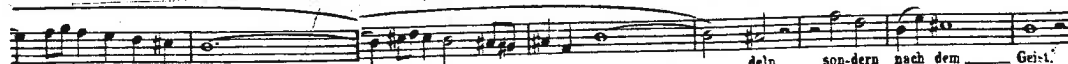
I see that I never

CHB

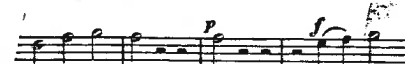
For example, Bach's extra rest on the word

"nothing" is a different handling

CHOIR



RITARDANDO



TAPE 2

ON



T1

really liked the
liked Brahms

thirds,

and this explains

why I never really

OFF

of the same idea by Cage, the idea of silence.

ON



EXACTLY
SYNCHRONIZED

CHOIR



T2



OFF

TI

SYNTHESIZER

li-ches an de - nen, die in Christo Je-su sind, es ist nun nichts Ver-damm - li-ches an de - nen, die in Chri - sto Je - su

CTF

CHOIR

nichts Ver-damm - li-ches an de - nen, die in Christo Je-su sind, es ist nun nichts Ver-damm - li-ches an de - nen, die in Chri - sto Je - su

CHOIR

sind,
sind,
die nicht nach dem Flei-sche wan-
sind, die

SING THROUGH TILL ...

auch dem Geist.
son - dern nach dem Geist.
son - dern nach dem Geist.
nach dem Geist.
Geist.

"UNTER DEINEN SCHIRMEN":

START TOGETHER; EACH INDIVIDUAL VOICE CHANGES RHYTHM SLOWLY (GETTING FASTER OR SLOWER); COLLECT ON "FREI" AND "BEI":

frei.
bei.

FROM "OB ES IST" TILL "SCHRECKEN":
CHANGE PITCHES (down to even whisper or talk) BUT KEEP THE RHYTHM

TAPE 1 ON

Je - sus will mir

+ SOUNDS -

OFF

(TI: ON TO OFF: 1'18")

CHOIR

schrek - ken: Je - sus will mich dek - ken.

ANY PITCH SING LIKE WRITTEN HOLD FOR 20-30 SECONDS

26"

ON

#8
#8

CHOIR: RESTS

TAPE 1

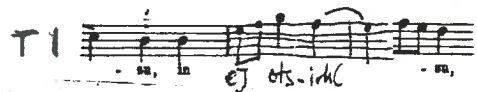
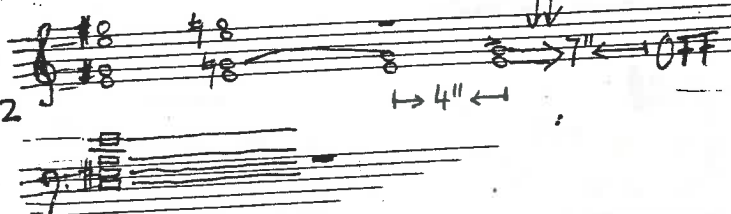
ON



CHOIR



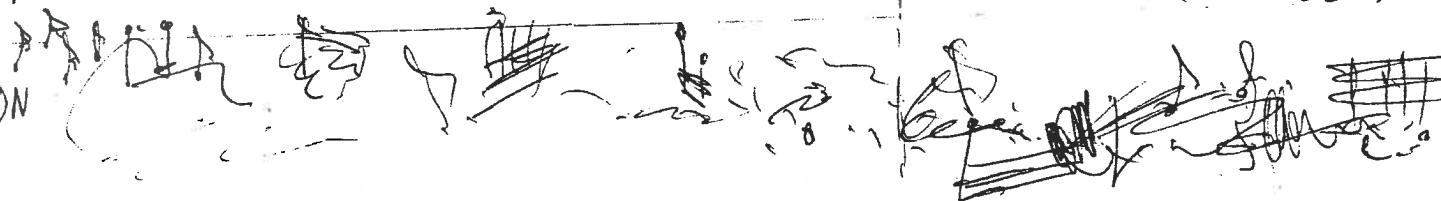
TAPE 2



ON

TAPE 2

ON



T1

single sounds

4"

I liked noises

I liked noises

even more than I

noises

CHOIR

CUE

81

S. Trotz, Trotz dem al - ten Dra - chen, Trotz dem al - ten Dra - chen, Trotz,

CONTINUE AS WRITTEN

T2

I liked noises

noises

just as much as I had liked single sounds

OFF

T1

OFF

CHOIR

ge, to - be, Welt, und sprin - ge, ich steh hier und sin - ge, ich steh hier und sin - ge in gar sich ser Rah,

PIANO

RITARDANDO

HOLD

TAPE 2

ON

Un - ter dei - nem Schir - men bin ich vor den Stür - men; al - ler Fein - de frei. Las den Sa - ton

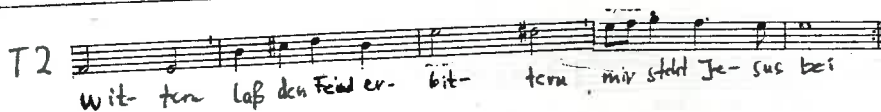
TAPE 1

ON

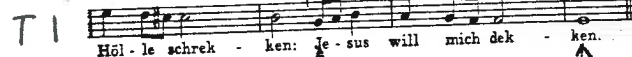


IN DER SICHERER RUH
(ABOUT TWICE AS SLOW)

IN GAR



KEEPS RUNNING (BLANK)



getting faster into the old tempo

NEW FF NO OFF

TAPE 2

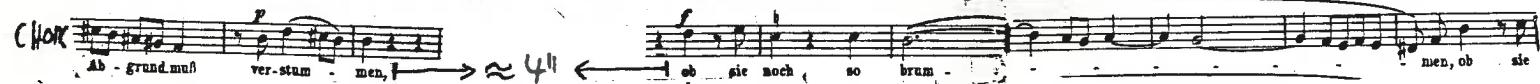
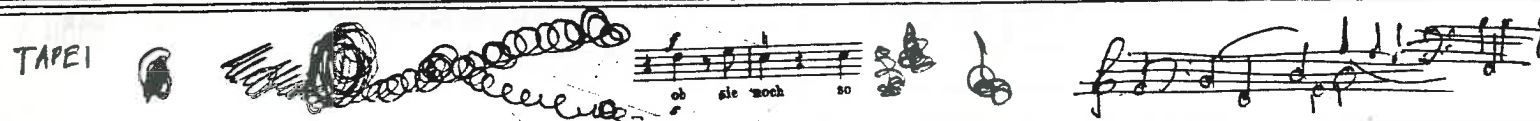
TAPE I

(↓ APPROXIMATELY SYNCHRONIZED: adjust tempo probably by getting faster)



FASTER

TAPE I



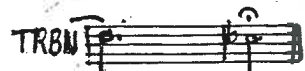
TROMBONE (ad libitum)



TAPE I



START INDIVIDUALLY SLOWING DOWN TO EVEN MURDER



TAPE 1

~~BRUMMEN~~

OFF

CHOIR



TRANSFORM

TO MUMBLE, TALK, WHISPER

ON: "OB SIE NOCH SO BRUMMEN" AND "JHR ABER SEID NICHT FLEISCHLICH SONDERN GEISTLICH" CHANGE INDIVIDUALLY INTENSITY AND SPEED

TROMBONE



ON

TAPE 2

However

modern music

still fascinated me

with all its modern

intervals

But in order to

CHANNEL A

WOW

have them

void having

not actually present

did

pro-gressions that would

to the ear

ap-peal to me

the mind had fixed it

make one think of

so that one had to a-

sounds that were

Avoiding

I began to see

The compositional technicality of a retrograde (the same melody backwards) can be easily demonstrated by reversing a tape section. The tape interacting with the choir yields shapes and lines or distorts them, making this distortion another quality to which the choir will react. The choir alone - a cappella - explores different aspects of the Chorale by keeping the pitches and changing the rhythm, or vice versa.

CHANNEL B

CHOIR

CONTINUE MUMBLING, WHISPERING, TALKING (OR HAVE DIFFERENT SOUNDS AND NOISES)

TAPE 2

that the separation of

mind and ear

had spoiled

the sounds

A not only contemporary

that a clean slate

was necessary.

This made me
I used noises

directly

They had not been in-tellectualized;
and didn't have to go through any abstraction

the ear could hear them
a-bout them

OFF

B

The aim is not to show a new Bach or an old Cage, but to make music today. Music in our century seems to have developed so fast beyond our concepts of understanding that we often find difficulty in keeping up with this development.

whereas the jump in one century from the horse as a moving category to the jet plane is a "natural" and accepted phenomenon.

TAPE 1 STARTS THE FUGUE 10-15" AFTER TAPE 2 IS FINISHED

PAGE 10
("IHR ABER SEID")

CHOIR CONTINUES HUMMING, WHISPERING, TALKING
UNTIL ONE VOICE AFTER THE OTHER
TAKES OVER FROM TAPE 1 (SOPRANO 2
STARTS SINGING, THEN TENOR, ALTO,
BASS, SPR 1) INDICATED IN THE SCORE
BY SC

200

Ihr a - ber seid nicht fleisch - lich, son - dern geist -

TAPE 1

201

Ihr a - ber seid nicht fleisch -

- lich, sondern geist -

- lich, son - dern geist -

- lich, son - dern geist -

- lich, ihr a - ber seid nicht fleisch - lich, son - dern geist -

204

- lich, sondern geist -

- lich, son - dern geist -

lich, ihr a - ber seid nicht fleischlich, seid nicht fleischlich, sondern geist -

- lich, sondern geist -

- lich, ihr a - ber seid nicht fleischlich, nicht fleischlich, sondern

Ihr a - ber seid nicht fleisch - lich, sondern geist -

lich, ihr a - ber seid nicht fleischlich, ihr a - ber seid nicht fleischlich, nicht fleisch - lich,

Ihr a - ber

lich, ihr a - ber seid nicht fleischlich, son - dern geist -

geistlich, ihr a - ber seid nicht fleischlich, ihr a - ber seid nicht fleischlich, nicht fleischlich, sondern

- lich, son -

210

son - dern geistlich, ihr a - ber seid nicht fleischlich, son - dern geist -

seid nicht fleischlich, son - dern geist -

- lich,

geistlich, son -

- dern geistlich,

213

lich, so an - ders Got - tes Geist in euch woh -

- lich, so an - ders Got - tes Geist in euch woh -

an - ders Got - tes Geist in euch woh - net, so an - ders

Got - tes Geist in euch woh - net, so

so an - ders Got - tes Geist in euch woh - net,

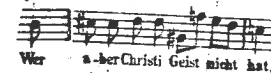
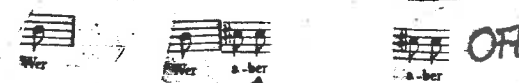
TAPE 1 LIE WA
SACHS 13 ER
WA

SLOTH KRAKOT ASCHT
N NET UND TOD

CHOIR CONTINUE
SINGING
TILL



HOLD
IF NECESSARY



CONTINUE AS
WRITTEN

CHOIR "WEG MIT ALLEN SCHÄTZEN WEG IHR EITLEN EHREN" AS WRITTEN "ICH MAG EUCH NICHT
HÖREN" START GETTING A LITTLE BIT SLOWER "BLEIBT MIR UNBEWUSST" SLOWER, INDIVIDUALLY
"ELEND, NOT, KREUZ MUSS LEIDEN" INDIVIDUALLY CHANGE RHYTHM, SLOW CHARACTER,
HOLD AND COLLECT ON "LEIDEN", "NICHT, NICHT SCHEIDEN" IN ORIGINAL TEMPO,
ALTO STARTS, FOLLOWED BY TENOR, SOPRANO, BASS.



SING AS WRITTEN



STOP, CONTINUE AS IF EVERYTHING IS O.K.

TAPE 2

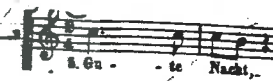
ON

ASCENDING FIFTHS

[Handwritten signature]

TAPE 1

→ ~15" ←



KEEPS RUNNING

CHOIR TML



TAPE 2



TAPE 1

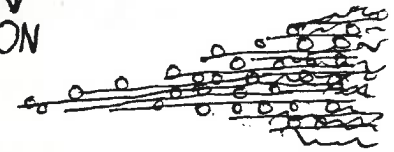
intellectualization—	I begin to hear	the old sounds	
though they are	the ones I had thought worn out,	worn out by	
not worn out	I begin to hear	the old sounds	as
new sounds.	not worn out		Obviously, they are
	Thinking	They are just as	audible as the
	And if one stops thinking about	had worn them out	OFF
	them,	suddenly they are	
fresh	and new.		

CHOIR CONTINUE AS WRITTEN
TROMBONE PLAYS ALTO-C.F.



TAPE 2

ON



("GUTE NACHT", END "SO NUN"
#WEICHT")

TAPE 1

31 (385)
So nun der Geist OFF

≈ 30"

TILL
CHOIR gu - te Nacht ge - ge - ben.

CONTINUE
nun der Geist des, der Je-sum von den To-ten auf-er-wecket hat, in

TAPE 2

MUSIC

TAPE 1

ON Je - su, mei - ne Freu - de.

TILL
CHOIR daß sein Geist in euch woh - net.

≈ 3"

CONTINUE
6. Weicht, ihr Trau - er - gei - ster,
De - nen, die Gott lie - ben,

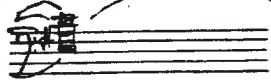
Je - su, mei - ne Freu - de.

HOLD
≈ 20"

TAPE 2

OFF

TAPE 1



Everybody
which is
it is a process

has a song
no
of singing

song at all :

and when you sing
you are

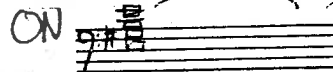
where you are

CHOIR



APPLAUSE (IF NECESSARY PROVOKE APPLAUSE BY BOWING ETC.)

TAPE 2



T1

All I know about method is that when I am not working I sometimes think I know something, but when I am working, it is quite clear that I know nothing.

OFF

ON

TAPE 2

OFF

All I know about method is that when I am not working I sometimes think I know something, but when I am working, it is quite clear that I know nothing.

(DEPENDING ON WHEN T2 IS TURNED ON -

- WHICH DEPENDS ON THE APPLAUSE - IT MIGHT NOT BE NECESSARY TO SWITCH T2 OFF HERE)

where you are
you are
and when you sing
of singing
it is a process
which is
no
song at all :
Everybody
has a song
which is