

## BLANCHE MOYSE CHORALE PRESENTS “FOUR CANTATAS” BY J. S. BACH

As in every recent leaf-color season, past members of the New England Bach Festival Orchestra will soon join the Blanche Moyses Chorale under the direction of Mary Westbrook-Geha to present music of the baroque master J. S. Bach. This year’s concert program, titled “Four Cantatas”, showcases a wide variety of the master’s musical styles. The concerts will take place on Friday, October 5, at 7:30 PM, and again on Sunday, October 7, at 2:30 PM, at the Brattleboro Music Center’s new auditorium on Blanche Moyses Way, off of Guilford Street in West Brattleboro, VT.

The concert program begins with Cantata #14, “Wär’ Gott nicht mit uns dieser Zeit”, possibly the last cantata that Bach ever composed. This is followed by the well-known Easter Cantata #4, “Christ lag in Todesbanden”, probably the first cantata that Bach ever composed. However, the original version of #4 has been lost, so the Chorale performs Bach’s later revision of this work. After the intermission, the concert continues with Cantata #32, “Liebster Jesu, mein Verlangen” and Cantata #20, “O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort”, both composed in the early years of Bach’s long tenure at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig.

The Blanche Moyses Chorale, a program of the Brattleboro Music Center, is an auditioned chamber chorus of about 30 voices, drawn from the Brattleboro area and beyond. Director Mary Westbrook-Geha has brought to the Chorale not only her expertise in vocal technique, but also her strong background in the music of Bach, having sung mezzo-soprano and contralto roles for many years at Boston’s Emmanuel Church, the Marlboro Music Festival, and the New England Bach Festival.

The Blanche Moyses Memorial Orchestra is formed around a core of veterans of the New England Bach Festival, assembled from busy lives in New York, Boston, Northampton, Brattleboro, and elsewhere. This year’s orchestra features acclaimed baroque oboist Stephen Taylor. Seasoned Bach admirers in the audience will also recognize many other musicians from past Blanche Moyses Memorial Orchestras.

The Chorale and orchestra will be complemented by vocal soloists Hyunah Yu (soprano), Steven Paul Spears (tenor), and Nathaniel Sullivan (bass). In the years 1998 - 2004, Ms. Yu and Mr. Spears often joined Ms. Westbrook-Geha as soloists in the New England Bach Festivals and the Marlboro Music Festivals, and have returned to our concerts in several recent years. Mr. Sullivan, a relative newcomer to the Brattleboro scene, returns after captivating the audience with his rich bass arias in Bach’s “Mass in B-minor” last fall.

Tickets to the October concerts may be obtained from the Brattleboro Music Center at 802-257-4523, online at [bmcvt.org](http://bmcvt.org), from any Chorale member, or at the door. General ticket prices are: \$20 if purchased in advance, \$25 if purchased at the door, and \$10 for students (college included). Preferred seating prices are \$40, in advance only. The auditorium is handicapped-accessible; for any special seating needs, advance notice is appreciated.

These performances are sponsored by Vermont Public Radio (VPR) and by the Vermont Arts Council. For more information, please call the Brattleboro Music Center at 802-257-4523, or visit [bmcvt.org](http://bmcvt.org).