

The museum at Johann Sebastian Bach's birthplace

# BACH HOUSE, EISENACH

Life & Work of  
Johann Sebastian Bach

• Live music  
on historic instruments

• Interactive  
sound installationen

MEDIA INFORMATION – for publication

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*Bachhaus director Dr. Jörg Hansen with engraved portrait of Electress Maria Josepha of Saxony, one item of the exhibit at the Bach Festival Jerusalem 2024. Photo: André Nestler / Bachhaus Eisenach*

## “Let us tend him, let us watch him”

### Bach museum from Eisenach, Germany, returns to Jerusalem

**From 18 to 24 March the Bach House, Eisenach, Germany, will again take part in the Jerusalem Bach Festival. It is the seventh time the museum contributes an exhibition to the festival which was founded in 2016. This year's exhibit at the YMCA, Jerusalem, focusses on the historic background of some of Bach's secular cantatas that are also performed during the festival.**

Since the founding of the event in 2016 the Bachhaus Eisenach, Germany, the museum in the city where Bach was born in 1685, has been presenting exhibitions detailing backgrounds of musical highlights from the Jerusalem Baroque Orchestra's annual Bach festivals. This year's 7th exhibition focusses on Bach's secular cantatas and their relationships to his better known church music. Two such cantatas, “Tönet ihr Pauken” (Sound all ye drums now, BWV 214) and “Auf, schmetternde Töne der muntern Trompeten” (Resound, pealing notes of the vigorous trumpets, BWV 207.2), will be performed on 19 March in Rehovot near Tel Aviv and on 20 and 22 March in Jerusalem. The exhibition will be shown in the lobby of the YMCA Three Arches Hotel, King David Street, Jerusalem, from 18 to 24 March. The exhibition is again accompanied by the museum's director Dr Joerg Hansen who will gladly explain items to visitors during exhibition times.

“On behalf of the JBO I welcome the the museum's participation in this year's 8th Bach in Jerusalem Festival”, says artistic director Dr David Shemer, the festival's founder and Professor of Harpsichord and Early Music at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance.

During all of his life Johann Sebastian Bach wrote not only spectacular church music but also secular pieces that are no less overwhelming, for weddings, funerals, birthdays and other festive occasions. Bach even wrote “Drammae per musica”, small opera pieces to be performed at a coffee house in Leipzig. While more than 200 vocal works for church performances have survived, only about 25 of his secular cantatas have come down to us with both texts and music. However, in many cases the music of seemingly lost Bach works can be reconstructed, as Bach often reused the music of his secular pieces for other works. For instance, the opening chorus “Fallt mit Danken, fallt mit Loben” (Fall with thanks, fall with praise) of the fourth part of Bach's Christmas Oratorio is a call to worship the infant



**BACHHAUS  
EISENACH**

[www.bachhaus.de](http://www.bachhaus.de)

#### Location

Frauenplan 21  
D-99817 Eisenach  
Germany

Opening times:  
10 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day

Tickets:  
12.50 €, groups 10 €, students 7.50 €

#### Contact

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Neue Bachgesellschaft e.V.  
An international association based in  
Leipzig, founded in 1900  
[www.neue-bachgesellschaft.de](http://www.neue-bachgesellschaft.de)



Registered in the German Government's  
Blue Book as cultural commemorative  
site of national significance

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**ARTEFAKT**  
KULTURKONZEPTE

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Jesus. But the music comes from Bach's *Dramma per Musica* "Hercules at the Crossroads", and the concern expressed in the original words "Lasst uns sorgen, lasst uns wachen" (Let us tend him, let us watch him) is for the baby Hercules, threatened by snakes, which he then goes on to strangle. Likewise, Bach reused the music of his cantata "Tönet, ihr Pauken" (Sound all ye drums now"), written in 1733 for the birthday of Electress Maria Josepha of Saxony, for the first part "Jauchzet, frohlocket" (Triumph, rejoicing) of his Christmas Oratorio. Two years later he performed the cantata "Auf, schmetternde Töne der muntern Trompeten" (Resound, pealing notes of the vigorous trumpets) for the nameday of Saxon Elector and Polish King Augustus III. for which in turn he reused earlier music for the appointment of a Leipzig University law professor that he had composed in 1725.

The exhibition at the YMCA explains the relationship between Bach's secular works and his church cantatas on six panels. Two small animated films in Hebrew and English explain how church music had evolved in Bach's time so that a piece written by Bach about the antique hero Hercules could be reused by him for his Christmas Oratorio, and how this "parody technique" works in detail. On display will be contemporary copperplate engravings of the recipients of some of Bach's congratulatory cantatas and the original librettos for Bach's *Drammae per musica* "Hercules at the Crossroads", "Aeolus Pacified", and "The Contest between Phoebus and Pan" which was written for performances at a Leipzig coffee house and Bach's most popular secular piece during his lifetime.

"I am delighted that we may once again contribute something to the Jerusalem festival, and look forward to exciting concerts and the meeting of old friends", says the museum's director Dr Jörg Hansen.

## **Bach House exhibition in Jerusalem:**

*"Johann Sebastian Bach – Music Director and Cantor"*

*Exhibition by the Bach House Eisenach, Germany*

*Lobby of the YMCA Three Arches Hotel, King David Street 26, Jerusalem.*

*18–24 March 2024*



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