

Editorial

It is a great pleasure to be introducing volume five of *Understanding Bach* after a full and eventful year in the life of Bach Network UK. Following five years of steady growth both in membership numbers and activities, 2010 was an opportune time to review the leadership structures and renew our vision for the coming decade. In February 2010 we established an Advisory Council to develop and moderate the scholarly input of BNUK, complementing the more formal and financial role of the Board of Trustees. Peter Smaill is the new chair of the Trustees, taking over from Reinhard Strohm, and Ruth Tatlow is chair of the Advisory Council. We have also set up a new structure for our publications, with an editorial team comprising Tanja Kovačević, Ruth Tatlow and Yo Tomita, and an editorial board made up of Advisory Council members. Our website continues to be a reference site, hosting membership sign-up, news, details of Dialogue Meetings and, most importantly, *Understanding Bach*, which attracts over 7000 readers per year. Communication with members continues through email updates from the Chairman, and, since August 2010, through our new Facebook page, which also broadens our outreach to the wider community interested in Bach.

The articles in this volume bear witness to our active sponsorship of and participation in the 14th Biennial International Conference on Baroque Music, held in Belfast from 30 June to 4 July 2010. Valued member of the BNUK Advisory Council Yo Tomita, together with his organising committee, decided on BACH as the conference theme, motivated by the symbolic number 14 ('BACH') and the coincidence of the anniversaries of the deaths of Johann Sebastian (260th), Anna Magdalena (250th), and Maria Barbara (290th), as well as the 300th birthday of Wilhelm Friedemann. Bach Network UK proposed twelve papers grouped into four sessions for the conference under the umbrella title 'New Perspectives on Bach Sources'. Members turned out in force to support, listen, discuss and contribute, and many lively conversations on Bach-related topics continued well beyond the end of the formal sessions.

A report of the Bach Network UK contribution to the 14th Baroque Conference can be found on pp. 99–101. Our sessions mixed senior scholars with scholars in the early stages of their careers, a pattern we established for the 13th Biennial Conference. This mixture is also reflected in our journal, with the first three papers passing a strict peer-review procedure, in contrast to a more lenient assessment for the papers in the Young Scholars' Forum.

The first article in this volume of *Understanding Bach* is Suzanne Aspden's masterful handling of 'Bach and the Feminised *Galant*' on pp. 9–22, an amplified

version of the paper she presented in the BNUK session 'Women's Contributions to Bach's Musical World'. Tanja Kovačević's in-depth study revealing important new insights into the early reception of the B minor Mass in Prague was not read at the 14th Biennial Conference because the source on which it is based was not discovered until summer 2010. Its importance for Bach reception is such, however, that we decided to commission the article for this volume of *Understanding Bach*. The editorial team was so struck by the importance of Joshua Rifkin's 'Blinding us with Science? Man, Machine and the Mass in B Minor' when we heard it at the Conference that we requested permission to reprint it in this volume.

It is exciting to see the fruition of two young scholar projects first reported in volume three of *Understanding Bach* when at their very early stages. Elise Crean read her paper on the Fourteen Canons BWV 1087, pp. 67-75, in Belfast in the BNUK session 'New Perspectives on Eighteenth-century Bach Sources'. The version presented here includes new insights and the subject will be covered in far greater depth in her forthcoming doctoral thesis. Ian Mills' 'J. S. Bach, the *Choralvorspiele* and the Late Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Notion' is a revised version of his paper prepared for the third BNUK session, 'New Perspectives on Nineteenth-century Bach Sources'. The final paper in the Young Scholar's Forum is Yael Sela's 'Anna Magdalena Bach's *Büchlein* (1725) as a Domestic Music Miscellany', also a revised version of the paper originally prepared for the Baroque Conference.

The J. S. Bach Dialogue Meetings continue to be the most tangible expression of BNUK, providing a meeting place for in-depth discussion of Bach's music. In 2009 we decided to make the Dialogue a biennial event, alternating with the Biennial Conference on Baroque Music and the American Bach Society conferences, held in even years. Registration for our Fifth Dialogue Meeting, Musselburgh and Edinburgh 12-14 August 2011, will open on 1 May. As we are limiting attendance to 100 participants, early booking is encouraged to avoid disappointment. We do hope you will consider joining us. Full details and links will be published on both our website and Facebook page.

In presenting this fifth volume of *Understanding Bach* on behalf of the editorial team of Bach Network UK, it is my hope that the articles will enrich and stimulate your thinking about Bach, his world and his music.

Ruth Tatlow (Volume Editor)
Stockholm, 21 March 2011