

BACH – MENDELSSOHN

Conversation between 2 composers on the meaning of life

PERFORMERS

Emmeran Rollin *organ*
9 singers

DURATION

1h20

What is the purpose of art in our constantly upheaved world? Art entertains, yes, but it does much more: it is perhaps the only space where emotions in all their forms, including pain and fear, can both be expressed and transformed, through beauty. Two major composers powerfully embody this idea: Johann Sebastian Bach, particularly in his famous *Actus tragicus*, where music brings about a true transfiguration of the fear of death, and Felix Mendelssohn, in his impressive a cappella psalms.

These two composers are often associated for historical and musicological reasons, given the devotion and musical lineage that ties Mendelssohn to Bach. Here, the program delves into their deeper philosophical and spiritual connections: this is not a simple juxtaposition of pieces, but rather a weaving of excerpts from cantatas, great a cappella motets, and organ works, forming a genuine conversation between Bach and Mendelssohn, a century apart. Each, in their era, with their own language and spiritual attachment, explores the same subject — the meaning of life and its inevitable end — through the same texts: psalms or their meditations, which express, sing, or shout all our human emotions, always very relevant. Thus, their works strikingly illustrate the moments of suffering we all experience; then, following the path laid out in the psalms and their meditation, they open a luminous door to an afterlife, a new realm for the imagination and spirituality of each individual. The works for solo organ complement this journey into the ineffable.

Organ and choir
Baroque
Romantic
German music

VIDEO CLIP

Félix Mendelssohn *Mein Gott, warum hast du mich verlassen ?* op.78 n°3



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PROGRAM

Félix Mendelssohn *Mein Gott, warum hast du mich verlassen ?* op.78 n°3

Jean-Sébastien Bach *Sinfonia*, BWV 4

Jean-Sébastien Bach *Den Tod niemand zwingen kunnt*, BWV 4

Jean-Sébastien Bach *Fugue*, BWV 849

Félix Mendelssohn *Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir*, op.23 n°1

Jean-Sébastien Bach *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 659

Félix Mendelssohn *Mitten wir im Leben sind*, op.23 n°3

Jean-Sébastien Bach *Ich ruf zu dir, « Orgelbüchlein »*, BWV 639

Jean-Sébastien Bach *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit, « Actus Tragicus »*, BWV 106 (extracts)

Félix Mendelssohn *Sonate VI, Allegro*

Jean-Sébastien Bach *Komm, Jesu, komm*, BWV 229