

## Classical: Bethlehem's Bach at Noon to feature new edition of Telemann concerto



*Oboist Nobuo Kitagawa created a new edition of Telemann's Concerto for 3 Oboes, 3 Violins and Continuo for the Bach Choir's Bach at Noon concert Jan. 9 at Central Moravian Church in Bethlehem. (Bach Choir)*

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Some months ago, Bach Choir of Bethlehem music director Greg Funfgeld thought it would be fun to program *Telemann's Concerto for 3 Oboes, 3 Violins and Continuo* for an upcoming concert. It's a jaunty, charming example of Telemann's Italianate works for a chamber ensemble.

"We got all excited, then a month passed, and I asked Greg whether we really were going to do it," says oboist Nobuo Kitagawa, a member of the Bach Festival Orchestra. "He said, well, we weren't, because he couldn't get hold of an available score. I was disappointed at first, but decided to poke around and see what I could come up with."

Kitagawa found his own edition of the score, which will be performed at the Bach Choir's first ***Bach at Noon*** program of the year on Tuesday at Central Moravian Church in Bethlehem. Joining Kitagawa are oboists Mary Watt and Lynne Cohen, along with violinists Elizabeth Field, Mary Ogletree and Linda Kistler.

The choral work on the program is J. S. Bach's *Cantata 97, "In aller meinen Taten,"* with Rosa Lamoreaux, soprano; Laura Atkinson, alto; Charles Blandy, tenor, and William Sharp, bass. Other Bach Festival Orchestra members playing both pieces include Evelyn Jacobs Luise, viola; Loretta O' Sullivan, cello; Stephen Groat, bass; Chuck Holderman, bassoon; and Thomas Goeman, harpsichord and organ.

Kitagawa, a graduate of the Yale School of Music, is a busy freelancer whose experience ranges from orchestral work and Broadway shows to chamber music and solo recitals. His career has taken him from his native Tokyo to performances in New York's Carnegie Hall and London's Royal Albert Hall. In addition to the Bach Festival Orchestra, Kitagawa is a member of the Pennsylvania Sinfonia and the Orchestra of New England. He is on the faculty of Lafayette College and the Kinhaven Adult Chamber Music Workshop.

Assembling the nuts and bolts of a musical score is an involved, yet interesting process. Kitagawa started with a standard source: the International Music Score Library Project, also known as the Petrucci Music Library, which provides free public domain sheet music.

"I found really clean hand-written copies by one of Telemann's contemporary copiers of what were probably performance parts. They had been stored in a library in Germany, which had them digitized and put on IMSLP," Kitagawa says. "So I thought, you know what, I'll just make an edition myself and publish it after the performance."

Kitagawa previously purchased a large Apple iPad Pro and found software to allow the use of an Apple pencil. "During the week of the previous Bach Festival, I started fiddling between rehearsals inputting notes onto the iPad. Eventually I exported the file to Sibelius (musical score notation software) to compile the score and the individual parts," he says. "There were seven parts in all —six parts plus the continuo section—to which I added a few articulations marks such as slurs, accents and that kind of thing."

The continuo part, which one might think of as the rhythm section, consisted of only the bass line, without chord symbols or harmony. "I had to do some guess work. It's not complicated music, so it wasn't really rocket science to come up with a harmony. I also produced the keyboard part and a separate bass line for cello, bass, and bassoon," Kitagawa says.

Kitagawa describes the piece as Vivaldi-like, with simple, repetitive and economical writing. "It's by no means a student piece —it's really the result of a highly skilled composer writing something simple," he says. "It's also very antiphonal, almost in the style of a Renaissance brass choir. You hear an echo effect among the principal instruments. So we're going to have to fight it out to determine where we'll stand or sit during the performance. Usually the principal oboe and principal violin like to stand close to each other so they can hear each another, but to get the antiphonal effect here I'm going to have to fight to split them."

While researching the piece, Kitagawa discovered an orchestral suite by Telemann that's never been published. "Bach wrote, what, four orchestral suites? Telemann wrote 135. So my next project might be to work on a modern edition of that. My ambition is to produce something

more complicated than the Telemann concerto that could become part of the standard repertoire of groups like the Bach Choir,” he says.

“Greg was pleased with the final score for the concerto, but was a little apprehensive about it,” Kitagawa says. “He said, ‘Nobuo, you’ve done so much work on this, we’ll have to pay you and we don’t have a lot of money.’ I told him he wouldn’t have to pay me anything since I’d publish it under my own name — all he’d have to do is help me clean it up and check for errors. I suppose that means I’ll have to pay him, but I haven’t told him that.”

**Bach at Noon**, 12:10 p.m. Jan. 9, Central Moravian Church, 73 W. Church St., Bethlehem. Free-will offering. 610-866-4382, [bach.org](http://bach.org).