

# INTRODUCTION

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On 16 September 1778, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach wrote to his publisher Johann Gottlob Immanuel Breitkopf:

If I can hope for 100 subscribers, which will become apparent within 4 weeks, I want to come out with my Heilig; this Heilig is an attempt to inspire far greater attention and sentiment through entirely natural and ordinary harmonic progressions than one can attain with any amount of nervous chromaticism. It is to be my swan song of this type, and thereby serve the purpose that I may not be forgotten too soon after my death.<sup>1</sup>

Bach did in fact publish his *Heilig, mit zwei Chören und einer Ariette zur Einleitung* (Heilig with two choirs and an ariette as an introduction, Wq 217) in 1779, “im Verlage des Autors” (published by the author) in Hamburg; it was printed by Breitkopf in Leipzig. Bach first performed the piece in an arrangement of his father’s cantata *Es erhub sich ein Streit* (BWV 19), as the Michaelmas *Quartalstück* for 1776.<sup>2</sup> The double-choir Heilig was incorporated into several other works for Hamburg, including three other *Quartalstücke*: *Wenn Christus seine Kirche schützt*, based on the cantata *Michaels Sieg* (Wf XIV/5) by Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach, in 1778; *Nun danket alle Gott* (Wq 241) in 1780 and 1783; and *Der Frevler mag die Wahrheit schmäh*n (Wq 246) in 1785. Bach also used the chorus in *Dank-Hymne der Freundschaft* (Hymn of thanks for friendship, H 824e) in 1785, and in *Musik am Dankfeste wegen des fertigen Michaelis-Thurms* (Music celebrating the

completion of St. Michael’s spire, H 823) in 1786.<sup>3</sup> Finally, he performed the Heilig as the concluding piece in a benefit concert for the “medizinische Armeninstitut” (medical institute for the destitute; see figure 1).

We are fortunate to possess both the autograph score and the original print of the Heilig, and they are published here in facsimile for the first time. Bach apparently did not usually keep his autographs once a work was printed. Instead, he often gave them away, and some (e.g., *Die Israeliten in der Wüste*, Wq 238) are no longer extant. The autograph score of the double-choir Heilig was probably sent to Baron van Swieten in Vienna, and eventually passed to Carl Ludwig Röllig, a “Bibliotheksdienner” at the Hofbibliothek in Vienna. It has been part of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek since 1804.<sup>4</sup>

Bach first broached the idea of publishing the Heilig in a letter to Breitkopf of 28 July 1778:

Additionally I have reserved a 2-chorus Heilig for the press. I have put the greatest and boldest effort in it to have an exceptional impact. This should (perhaps) be the last of this type, so that I may not so soon be forgotten in the future. It is about 5 sheets of score thick, but, what do you think, 28 staves on one page. Very large paper must be used. What would a printing of 500 copies probably cost? From this I could determine the price of the subscription.<sup>5</sup>

Bach’s edition, after extensive correspondence with Breitkopf, was published in 1779. The ariette fit on two pages

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1. *The Letters of C.P.E. Bach*, translated and edited by Stephen L. Clark (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997; hereafter *CPEB-Letters*), 125; *Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Briefe und Dokumente. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, edited by Ernst Suchalla, 2 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994; hereafter *CPEB-Briefe*), 1:694. “Wenn ich Hoffnung zu 100 Pränumeranten, habe, welches sich binnen 4 Wochen zeigen wird, wollte ich mit meinem Heilig herausrücken; dieses Heilig ist ein Versuch, durch ganz natürliche und gewöhnliche harmonische Fortschreitungen eine weit stärkere Aufmerksamkeit und Empfindung zu erregen, als man mit aller ängstlichen Chromatik nicht im Stande ist zu thun. Es soll mein Schwanen Lied, von dieser Art, seyn, und dazu dienen, daß man meiner nach meinem Tode nicht zu bald vergeßen möge.”

2. See Ulrich Leisinger, “‘Es erhub sich ein Streit’ (BWV 19): Carl Philipp Emanuel Bachs Aufführungen im Kontext der Hamburgischen Michaelismusiken,” *Bach-Jahrbuch* (1999): 105–26.

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3. For a summary of these works, see Paul Cornelson, “Zur Entstehungs- und Aufführungsgeschichte von Carl Philipp Emanuel Bachs ‘Heilig,’” *Bach-Jahrbuch* (2006): 273–89.

4. For a full description of the score see Christine Blanken, *Die Bach-Quellen in Wien und Alt-Österreich. Katalog, Leipziger Beiträge zur Bach-Forschung 10* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2011), 1:394–95, and the critical report of CPEB:CW, V/6.1.

5. Slightly adapted from *CPEB-Letters*, 124; *CPEB-Briefe*, 1:686–87. “Außerdem habe ich ein 2 chörigtes Heilig zum Drucke bestimt. Hierin habe ich den meisten und kühnsten Fleiß bewiesen zu einer guten Ausnahme. Dies soll (vielleicht) in dieser Art das letzte seyn, damit ich einstens nicht so bald vergeßen werde. Es ist ungefehr 5 Bogen Partitur stark, aber, was dünkt Ihnen, 28 Systeme auf eine Seite. Man muß sehr groß Papier nehmen. Was dürfte eine Auflage von 500 Stücken wohl betragen? Damit ich den Preis der Pränumeration bestimmen könne.”

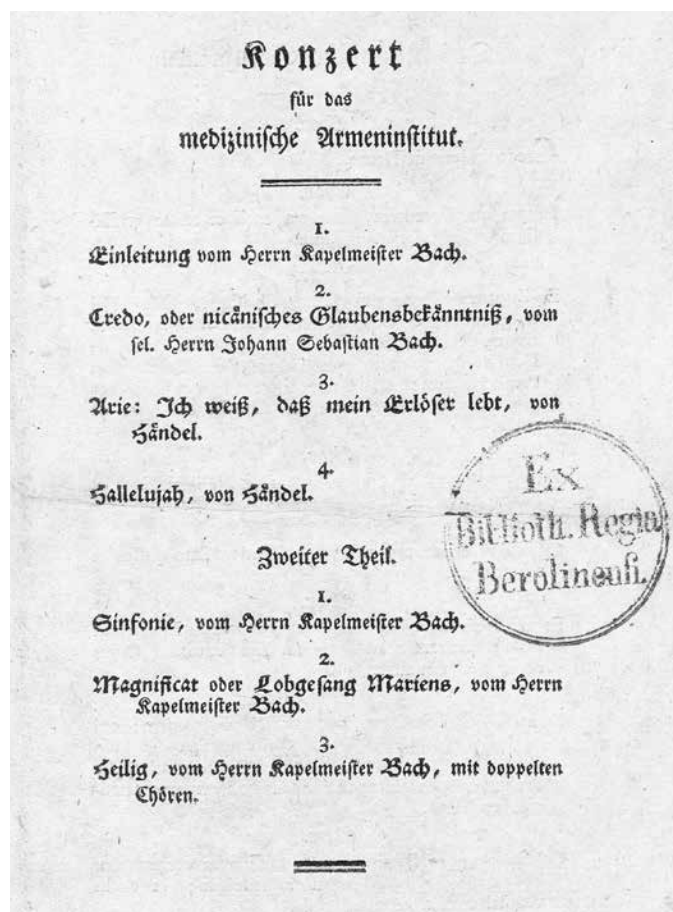


FIGURE I. Program for the 1786 benefit concert.  
Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz,  
Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv, Mus. T 1925

(half a sheet) with four systems of five staves each, and—as Bach had predicted—the double-choir *Heilig* fit on five bifolios with two systems of fourteen staves apiece, each having three trumpets and timpani, two oboes, strings, and four-part voices. The title page and subscription list are on the first two pages, for a total of six bifolios. Bach ordered 550 copies of the print and had 267 subscriptions. The autograph score served as the copytext for the print (see Bach's letter to Breitkopf of 12 December 1778),<sup>6</sup> and there are very few differences between the two. (For further details, see the commentary in CPEB:CW, V/6.1.)

One aspect of the autograph score deserves special mention. All the pages of the score are approximately the same size, 37.5 x 21 cm, except the last sheet (pp. 21–22), which is oversized paper, 48 x 29.5 cm. This probably served as a folder for the rest of the autograph score. Bach used a sheet of a similar size for the additional *particella* for three trumpets and timpani for his *Magnificat*, Wq 215, which were

added for a performance in 1779 (see CPEB:CW, V/1.2). Therefore, in the present facsimile, these last two pages are slightly more reduced than the rest of the autograph score.

Two contemporaneous prints of the libretto survive: one that might have been included with the score, and another that was probably produced for the 1786 benefit concert, since it also includes the *Credo* of the Mass in B Minor by Johann Sebastian Bach. (Both of these librettos are published in CPEB:CW, VIII/3.3.)

I want to acknowledge the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek for allowing us to publish a facsimile of the autograph score (A-Wn, Mus. Hs. 15517), and Harvard University, The Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library of the Harvard College Library for the original print (US-CA, Merritt Room Mus 627.2.578 PF). I also thank Ulrich Leisinger, Peter Wollny, Christine Blanken, Jason B. Grant, and my colleagues at the editorial office of CPEB:CW for their assistance and support.

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6. CPEB-Letters, 130–31; CPEB-Briefe, 1:716–18.