The Munich Bach Choir

“… modern Bach …” / or / “… which wondrous transformation that dignified Munich Bach Choir is currently undergoing …” (Rondo 2008)

The Munich Bach Choir, founded in 1954 by Karl Richter, soon gained international renown, particularly for performing the works of Johann Sebastian Bach – both live onstage during major international concert tours (be it in Paris, Moscow, Tokyo or New York) or as documented by numerous recordings.

After Richter’s death in 1981 – Leonard Bernstein conducted the memorial concert in his honour – Hanns-Martin Schneidt took over the baton between 1984 and 2001. He began to expand the choir’s repertoire and continued the by now traditional concert tours. The following years saw the choir collaborating with several guest conductors, predominantly Baroque specialists such as Peter Schreier, Bruno Weil and Ralf Otto.

A new era began in 2005, when Hansjörg Albrecht was appointed as new Musical Director – “a godsend for the Munich Bach Choir”, as Süddeutsche Zeitung phrased it. Under his leadership the ensemble developed a new artistic profile and gained a clear and transparent choral sound that many critics since have highlighted. Agile, animated performances of Bach’s works, inspired by historically informed practices, remain a key focus of the choir’s schedule. Unusual program concepts and a steadily expanding repertoire have become additional trademarks in recent years, marked by collaborations with the ballet companies of John Neumeier or Marguerite Donlon and with acclaimed soloists such as Marlis Petersen, Simone Kermes, Klaus Florian Vogt, or Michael Volle.

The Munich Bach Choir is regularly working with its traditional artistic partners, the Munich Bach Orchestra and Bach Collegium München, but has also teamed up with other notable European orchestras. It performs at Munich’s grand concert halls as well as at other important musical centers and international festivals. CD and DVD productions document the long-standing fertile collaboration between Munich’s major Bach ensembles – like the recording of Enjott Schneider’s oratorio “Augustinus”, issued in 2015.

In March 2016 the Munich Bach Choir returned to Moscow after more than 35 years to perform Bach’s St. Matthew Passion. Later that same year the choir toured eight major cathedrals of Southern France with Handel’s “Messiah” to great
acclaim. 2017 saw the choir in Passau for the international *Europäische Wochen* festival, performing in the sold-out basilica of Ottobeuren Abbey and collaborating with the Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra for its first concert at Budapest’s Palace of Arts.

The 2018 Carl Orff Festival ended with a scenic performance of Orff’s Easter Play, contrasted with Bach’s Easter Oratorio. In October 2018 the Munich Bach Choir toured Israel for the very first time, invited by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Conducted by Zubin Mehta the choir sang ten sold-out concerts with Mozart’s Coronation Mass, performed the symphonic poem *The Prophet* by contemporary composer Uri Brener, and opened each concert with Hatikvah, Israel’s national anthem. A live streamed broadcast of one of these concerts garnered a worldwide enthusiastic audience. In late October the choir returned to Moscow to sing Bach’s Mass in B Minor – just like with Karl Richter 50 years before. Even this concert was broadcast online.

www.muenchener-bachchor.com

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*November 2018 – Please only use this biography and dispose of any older material.*

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