

A GUIDE TO SUITABLE BASS SOLO VOCAL REPERTOIRE

BY J. S. BACH FOR COLLEGIATE BARITONE

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In the Baroque period, the baritone voice was not yet well-defined, but many composers wrote vocal pieces with a range appropriate for the modern baritone voice. Composers used the general categories of soprano, alto, tenor, and bass for solo voice in their compositions. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was no different from other Baroque composers in writing solo works to be performed by one of the four main voice types. The various ranges and tessituras of J. S. Bach's vocal works for bass solo voice are not limited to being sung by low basses, but may also be sung by more medium ranged baritones. The purpose of this research is to guide collegiate voice teachers and their baritone students in selecting appropriate repertoire from the works of Bach on the basis of each students' level of development and to categorize four groups of bass solos by Bach for collegiate baritone students: beginning level for freshmen, intermediate level for sophomores, advanced level for juniors and seniors, and pre-professional level for seniors and graduate students. This research was prepared in conjunction with a DMA lecture-recital of eight bass solos for collegiate baritone voice, selected from the study; two vocal works for each proficiency level.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the Baroque period, the baritone voice was not yet well-defined, but many composers wrote vocal pieces with a range appropriate for the modern baritone voice. Composers used the general categories of soprano, alto, tenor, and bass for solo voice in their compositions. According to Richard Miller, the term “bass voice” in the Baroque period included the modern voice type of the baritone; in addition, the medium vocal range of male voice in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was appropriate for the range of baritone we use today.¹ Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), who composed numerous cantatas and other vocal music, was no different from other Baroque composers in writing solo works to be performed by one of the four main voice types. The various ranges and tessituras of J. S. Bach’s vocal works for bass solo voice are not limited to being sung by low basses, but may also be sung by more medium ranged baritones.

The primary purpose of this research is to guide collegiate voice teachers and their baritone students in selecting appropriate repertoire from the works of J. S. Bach on the basis of each students’ level of development, including technique, voice range, and agility, and to categorize four groups of bass solos by Bach for collegiate baritone students: beginning level for freshmen, intermediate level for sophomores, advanced level for juniors and seniors, and pre-professional level for seniors and graduate students. As young baritone students gain better breath control, vocal agility, and a wider voice range through proper training with their voice instructor, they may advance to the next level of arias. With these vocal works of J. S. Bach,

¹ Richard Miller, *National Schools of Singing: English, French, German, and Italian Techniques of Singing Revisited* (London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1977), 164.

baritone singers can prepare for competitions and auditions which require an oratorio or cantata aria composed before 1800, such as the NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) National Student Auditions and Artist Awards. Furthermore, this repertoire will help students to perform on the recital stage or in church services, since many voice students serve as a section leader in church choir.

This study is limited to J. S. Bach's bass solo arias and ariosos from sacred and secular cantatas, masses, passions, and oratorios between BWV 1 and BWV 249. The study will not cover doubtful and spurious works no longer considered Bach's compositions, such as BWV 15, probably written by Johann Ludwig Bach; BWV 141, attributed to Georg Philipp Telemann; and BWV 142, attributed to Johann Kuhnau.²

This research was prepared in conjunction with a DMA lecture-recital of eight bass solos for collegiate baritone voice, selected from the study; two vocal works for each proficiency level. The appendix contains the lists of suitable bass repertoire from J. S. Bach for collegiate baritone voice which divide each group from beginning to pre-professional level according to range, tessitura, and length of melismas.

² James C. McKinney, "The Solo Bass Voice in the Cantatas of J. S. Bach" (Doctoral diss., University of Southern California, 1969), 289, 305.

CHAPTER 2

THE BARITONE VOICE IN THE BAROQUE AND MODERN ERAS

The term baritone originates from late fifteenth-century French polyphonic sacred music as a signification of a voice lower than bass. Franchinus Gaffurius used *baritonus*, which means a deep voice, for the lowest part of the four normal voices in his *Practica musicae* composed in 1496. In seventeenth-century Italy, the term baritone was used for choral singers who sang low parts. In 1732, Johann Gottfried Walther wrote in *Musicalisches Lexicon* that baritone must have aspects of both the high range of the tenor and the depth of the bass.³ According to Owen Jander in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*:

Mozart's leading roles for baritone and bass-baritone derive from the *Basso buffo* tradition, in which no clear distinction is drawn between bass and baritone. The first Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Stefano Mandini, described as a 'primo buffo mezzo carattere', had a voice that would now be considered a baritone.⁴

Until the nineteenth century, the term baritone was not frequently used by composers of operas and vocal music. Nevertheless, many opera and oratorio arias from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are considered suitable repertoire for baritones.

According to modern performance practice, many European opera theaters in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have used the *Fach* system, which categorizes a wider variety of voice types than were understood in the Baroque period. The German word *Fach* translates to "category," or "specialty." In the *Fach* system, there are more than twenty-five

³ Owen Jander, J. B. Steane, and Elizabeth Forbes, "Baritone." *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: Grove's Dictionaries Inc., 2001), 731.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 731.

different vocal classifications. For example, the baritone voice is divided into several classifications, such as *Heldenbariton* (Literally “Heroic” Baritone), who has an authoritative sound and a heavier and darker timbre; *Lyrischer Bariton* (Lyric Baritone), having “a smooth, beautiful, [and] flexible voice with a *bel canto* line and effective top;” and *Kavalierbariton* (Cavalier Baritone), whose range from A₂ to G₄ with “a brilliant voice with warm, beautiful color capable of singing coloratura passages, smooth lyric lines and dramatic passages without effort,” according to Pearl Yeadon-McGinnis in her book *The Opera Singer’s Career Guide: Understanding the European Fach System*.⁵ Furthermore, James Anderson’s research systematically specializes each voice type in his book *The Complete Dictionary of Opera & Operetta*. Anderson describes more specific voice types according to European countries: France, Germany, and Italy, and provides their proper range and examples of opera role for each voice type. Below is a list of baritone voice classification by Anderson:

Figure 1: The main French, German, and Italian categories of baritone voice by Anderson

<i>Nation</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Example</i>
France	<i>basse-taille</i>	G ₂ to F ₄	Theseus in <i>Hippolyte et Aricie</i>
	<i>Baritone</i>	C ₃ to A _{b4}	Athanaël in <i>Thaïs</i>
	Martin	C ₃ to A ₄	Pelléas in <i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>
Germany	<i>Bass-bariton</i>	A _{b2} to F ₄	Wotan in <i>Das Rheingold</i>
	<i>Spielbariton</i>	A _{b2} to G ₄	title role in <i>Don Giovanni</i>
	<i>Heldenbariton</i>	C ₃ to A _{b4}	Jokanaan in <i>Salome</i>
	<i>Holder Bariton</i>	C ₃ to A _{b4}	Sir Ruthven in <i>Der Vampyr</i>
Italy	<i>Kavalierbariton</i>	C ₃ to A _{b4}	Count in <i>Capuccio</i>
	<i>baritone cantante</i>	C ₃ to G ₄	title role in <i>Belisario</i>
	<i>baritono brillante</i>	C ₃ to A _{b4}	Dr Malatesta in <i>Don Pasquale</i>
	Verdi baritone	C ₃ to A ₄	di Luna in <i>Il Trovatore</i> ⁶

⁵ Pearl Yeadon-McGinnis. *The Opera Singer's Career Guide: Understanding the European Fach System*, ed. Marith McGinnis Willis (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2010), 37-38.

⁶ James Anderson, *The Complete Dictionary of Opera & Operetta* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, Ltd., 1989), 50.

Anderson examines eleven different baritone voice types and shows the voice range as low as G₂ and as high as A₄, giving specific opera roles for each type of voice classification. Interestingly, the average range among these eleven baritone classifications, such as *baryton* in France, *Heldenbariton*, *Kavalierbariton* in Germany, and *baritono brillante* in Italy, is about C₃ to Ab₄ which is very close to a tenor voice range. As most opera roles are subdivided into specific voice types in the *Fach* system, solo voice works from the Baroque period need to be reclassified by voice type according to the modern voice classifications, since baroque composers rarely used the vocal categories apart from the four general categories: soprano, alto, tenor, and bass, for their solo pieces.

In order to select the appropriate vocal range of works for the baritone voice, this project will first examine the average vocal range of the baritone voice. There are three similar definitions of baritone voice and its range from Manuel Garcia, James McKinney, and Owen Jander. First of all, in his book *Hints on Singing*, Manuel Garcia, considered one of the most important voice teachers of the nineteenth century, defines the baritone as the middle male voice, saying it has less volume than the bass but more ease and ringing sound in the higher register. He clarifies the range of baritone as Bb₂ to F₄, which can be extended from G₂ to F#₄.⁷ Second, in *The Diagnosis & Correction of Vocal Faults* by James McKinney, on the other hand, the author clarifies that the practical twelfth of the baritone voice is from B₂ to F#₄, with which the singer can handle about seventy-five percent of the literature for baritone voice, and the ideal two octaves for baritone is from Ab₂ to Ab₄.⁸ Third, Owen Jander provides a definition of the term of baritone that says “the most common category of male voice, normally written for within the

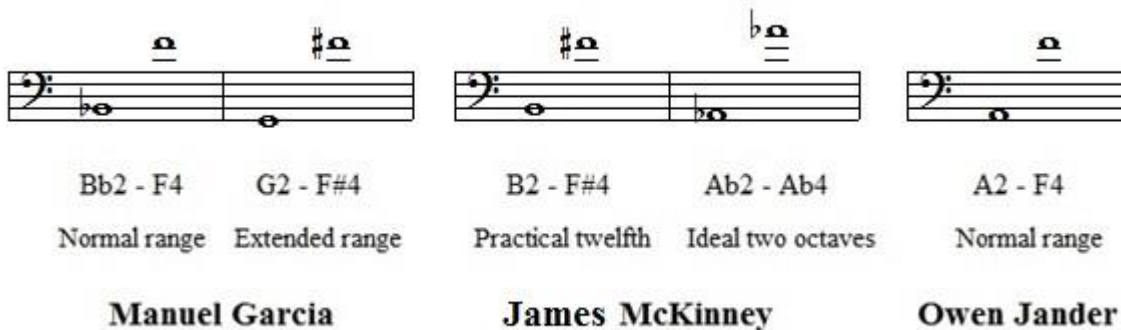
⁷ Manuel Garcia, *Hints on Singing* (London: Ascherberg, Hopwood and Crew, Ltd., 1984), 10.

⁸ James C. McKinney, *The Diagnosis & Correction of Vocal Faults* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982), 114.

range A to f1 [A2 to F4] which may be extended at either end, particularly in solo writing.”⁹

These three definitions are shown in figure 2 below:

Figure 2: The ranges of baritone by Manuel Garcia, James McKinney, and Owen Jander



The result of synthesizing three experts' views on the baritone voice and range, the acceptable normal vocal range of baritone voice is between A2 and F#4. A young male singer in college who has a middle voice range often switches his voice type between bass-baritone and baritone or tenor and baritone. Until the young singer obtains his true vocal color and freedom with good support and breath management, he and his voice teacher need to be very wise in deciding his voice classification. For his healthy voice training with his voice teacher, it is better not to hurry in deciding his voice type in the first year or even second year in college. With the progress of proper vocal training and healthy singing practice, both young singer and voice teacher will become aware of the student's true voice type. If they choose a vocal classification which is too high or too low for the student, the consequences to the singer's voice could be severe. James McKinney points out that "the dangers which can result from misclassification

⁹ Jander, Steane, and Forbes, "Baritone." *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., 730.

have been listed already: loss of tonal beauty and freedom of production, a shortened singing career, continuing frustration and disappointment, and the possibility of serious vocal damage.”¹⁰

A comfortable one-octave singing zone for young baritone students in college is probably between C3 to C4 and D3 to D4, comparing to bass-baritone (between C3 to C4 and Bb2 to Bb3) and bass (between Bb2 to Bb3 and A2 to A3). As the baritone student develops his singing technique, breath management, and vocal agility with proper vocal training, his vocal range will be gradually increased to the extended range of Garcia’s point of view: G2 to F#4, or even further to the ideal two octaves as described by McKinney: Ab2 to Ab4. Based on the comfortable one-octave zone for young baritones and these classifications of baritone voice ranges by Garcia, McKinney, and Jander, this study categorizes four groups of J. S. Bach’s bass solo arias, containing their appropriate ranges: beginning level, B2 to D4; intermediate level, A2 to E4; advanced level, A2 to F#4; and pre-professional, Ab2 to G4.

¹⁰ McKinney, *The Diagnosis & Correction of Vocal Faults*, 121.

CHAPTER 3

BASS SOLO REPERTOIRE BY J. S. BACH FOR BARITONE VOICE

Johann Sebastian Bach was born into a deep-rooted musical family in Eisenach; his father, Johann Ambrosius, was the director of Eisenach's town orchestra and his grandfather, Christoph, was a town musician in Erfurt and Arnstadt.¹¹ He had a profound Lutheran doctrine as a serious confession of his faith from his family. J. S. Bach wrote various musical compositions, such as organ works, chamber music, cantatas, violin concertos, and keyboard music. His most well-known compositions would be his vocal works including both sacred and secular cantatas, oratorios, passions, and masses. Charles Terry states about Bach's cantata compositions:

According to his son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, he composed five Cantatas for every occasion on which Cantatas were required at Leipzig. That is, he wrote 295. Of that number certainly thirty date from before 1723. Therefore, as Cantor of St. Thomas's, he composed at least 265. Of the total number 208 survive.¹²

With his great musical craftsmanship and diligence, J. S. Bach composed about 300 cantatas, both sacred and secular; four passions, only two of which survive, the *Mattäus-Passion*, (*St. Matthew Passion*) BWV 244 composed in 1727 and *Johannes-Passion*, (*St. John Passion*) BWV 245 composed in 1724; and three oratorios: *Weihnachts-Oratorium*, BWV 248 (*Christmas Oratorio*), *Oster-Oratorium*, BWV 249 (*Easter Oratorio*), and *Himmelfahrts-Oratorium*, BWV 11 (*Ascension Oratorio*). Moreover, Bach wrote the *Mass in B minor*, BWV 232 composed in 1749; *Magnificat*, BWV 243; and four Lutheran masses: in the key of F major (BWV 233), A major (BWV 234), G minor (BWV 235), and G major (BWV 236).

¹¹ Martin Geck, *Johann Sebastian Bach: Life and Work*, trans. John Hargraves (Orlando: Harcourt, Inc., 2006), 36.

¹² Charles S. Terry, *Bach: The Cantatas and Oratorios* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), 49.

In his cantatas, there are about 140 arias and ariosos for bass solo. There are likely even more for the considerable number of his cantatas that are lost. Furthermore, an additional fifteen bass solo arias and one arioso were written for other works: two arias from the *Mass in B minor*, four arias from Lutheran masses, one aria from *Magnificat*, four arias from the *St. Matthew Passion*, two arias and one arioso from the *St. John Passion*, and two arias from the *Christmas Oratorio*. In the *St. Mark Passion*, BWV 247, an eight-measure arioso in text of a confession of Jesus on the cross is shown in the vocal score in the Bärenreiter edition; however, this study excludes this arioso because of its unauthenticity since J. S. Bach's manuscript of the *St. Mark Passion* was lost.

James McKinney explains that 118 of 142 cantata arias and ariosos for bass soloist have a typical voice range of G2 to E4 and a moderate tessitura, which is the best singing range of modern bass-baritone voice. However, he mentions that a majority of Bach's bass arias are too low for baritone voice to sing comfortably.¹³ Several bass solo arias, such as "Hier ist das rechte Osterlamm" from *Christ lag in Todes Banden*, BWV 4, "Wer bist du?" from *Bereitet die Wege, bereitet die Bahn*, BWV 132, and "Ach, ich sehe, jetzt, da ich zur Hochzeit gehe" from *Ach, ich sehe, jetzt, da ich zur Hochzeit gehe*, BWV 162, contain low E notes (E2) or even lower D notes (D2) which most singers with a baritone voice range can barely hit. There are twenty-two arias from secular cantatas by J. S. Bach for bass solo. These arias have a higher range and tessitura than sacred cantata arias. The average range of these secular arias is A2 to F4, which is perfectly matched to the normal range of baritone voice as defined by Owen Jander. Five bass solo arias from secular cantatas have exceptionally high ranges and tessituras, as shown in Figure 3 below:

¹³ McKinney, "The Solo Bass Voice in the Cantatas of J. S. Bach," 172.

Figure 3: List of five secular arias for bass solo, containing high ranges and tessituras

BWV No.	Name of aria	Range	Tessitura
173a 3	“Leopolds Vortrefflichkeiten”	B2 to G4	High
173a 7	“Dein Name gleich der Sonnen geh”	C#3 to F#4	High
201 5	“Mit Verlangen drück ich deine zarten Wangen”	B2 to F#4	Moderately high
205 3	“Wie will ich lustig lichen”	F#2 to F#4	High
205 11	“Zurücke, zurücke, geflügeltenWinde”	A2 to F#4	Moderately high

These five secular bass arias, especially, are more suitable for baritone voice than for bass-baritone or bass voice. In addition, Bach’s other compositions for bass soloist from masses, passions, and oratorios, whose average range is between A2 and Eb4 are mostly appropriate for both bass-baritone and baritone voice.

Several bass solo arias include high tessituras with low notes, such as G2 and F#2, which may cause a breathy and weak sound in the low notes for young baritones. When a collegiate student with a middle voice range sings a song or aria with a high tessitura and encounters low notes right after a high range melodic line, he will find difficulty in singing these low notes due to switching his vocal register from middle to low. For example, one of Renato’s arias, “Eri tu che macchiavi quell'anima,” from *Un ballo in maschera* by Giuseppe Verdi contains a melodic line in the high range, descending from Eb4 to A2. The descending melody line is shown in Example 1 below:

Example 1: mm. 39-42 of “Eri tu che macchiavi quell'anima” from *Un ballo in maschera*

RE. 39
 . - fi - - di e d'un tratto ese - - cra - - bi - le l'u - - ni -
 descending
 41
 - verso avve - le - ni per me, av - ve - le - ni per mel Tra - - di -

Even though their singing voice for the middle and high ranges of the aria is stable, many baritone singers find a problem with singing the low note, A2.

Another example from an oratorio is the aria, “It is enough” from *Elijah*, op. 70 by Felix Mendelssohn. This aria has both the proper tessitura and range for baritone voice; however, the low note, A2, in measure 72 causes a weak and breathy sound for baritones. Below is Example 2, showing a descending half notes movement from Elijah’s melody, E4 – C#4 – C4 – A2:

Example 2: mm. 62-75 of “It is enough” from *Elijah*, op. 70

62
Elijah. *f*
tä - - re ha - ben sie zer - bro - chen, und dei - - ne Pro - phe - ten
co - ve - nant, and throw n down thine al - tars, and slain all thy pro - phets,

67
mit dem Schwert er - würgt, und dei - ne Pro - phe - ten mit dem Schwert er -
slain them with the sword, and slain thy - pro - phets, slain them with the

72
würgt.
sword
A2
Ioh ha - be ge - ei - - fert um den
I have been ve - ry jea - - lous for the

descending E4
C#4 C4 A3

The A2 notes from “Eri tu che macchiavi quell'anima” and “It is enough” are in the normal range for baritone voice. Nonetheless, both low notes are not easy to sing for middle voice range singers because of the high tessitura of the preceding phrase. Just as in both of these examples, “Et in Spiritum Sanctum” for bass solo from the *Mass in B minor*, BWV 232 has the same low note problem. This aria has a high tessitura and starts with a melody in a relatively

high range, suitable for baritone voice. The high tessitura of the bass solo is shown in Example 3 below:

Example 3: mm. 13-17 of “Et in Spiritum Sanctum” from the *Mass in B minor*, BWV 232



13 **Bass** *p* High tessitura

Et in Spi-ri-tum sanctum Do-minum et vi - vi - fi - can - tem,

The image shows a musical score for a bass solo. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music starts at measure 13. A red box highlights measures 13 through 17, labeled "High tessitura". The lyrics under the notes are "Et in Spi-ri-tum sanctum Do-minum et vi - vi - fi - can - tem,".

Even though this aria contains a high tessitura, a low F#2 in measure 92 is a challenge for a singer with a medium range. See Example 4 below:

Example 4: mm. 90-94 of “Et in Spiritum Sanctum” from the *Mass in B minor*, BWV 232



90

phe - tas, per Pro-phe - tas. Et unam sanetam ca - tho - li - cam

F#2

The image shows a musical score for a bass solo. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music starts at measure 90. A red circle highlights a note in measure 92, labeled "F#2". The lyrics under the notes are "phe - tas, per Pro-phe - tas. Et unam sanetam ca - tho - li - cam".

The other bass aria from the *Mass in B minor*, “Quoniam tu solus sanctus,” is more appropriate for a bass-baritone voice rather than a baritone voice because of its lower tessitura.

In addition, the tessitura in “Darum sollt ihr nicht sorgen” from *Es wartet alles auf dich*, BWV 187 is high, and its range is C3 to Eb4, except the last note. In measure 89, the vocal line finishes on the tonic G2 as shown Example 5 below:

Example 5: mm. 87-89 of “Darum sollt ihr nicht sorgen” from *Es wartet alles auf dich*, BWV 187

Musical notation for Example 5, showing a bass line with a circled G2 note. The notation is in bass clef and includes the lyrics "Al - - - les bedür - fet." The circled note is a G2 note, labeled "G2" below it.

On the other hand, if they are neither the tonic nor the dominant but passing-tones or unstressed short notes, these kinds of low notes would be less demanding for collegiate baritone students.

For instance, “Greifet zu, fasst das Heil” from *Ich liebe den Höchsten von ganzem Gemüte*, BWV 174 includes a moderately high tessitura and one low G2 note in measure 108. Because it is short and unstressed, collegiate baritone singers are able to handle this low note. Below is

Example 6, showing an unstressed eighth G2 note:

Example 6: mm. 108-111 of “Greifet zu, fasst das Heil” from *Ich liebe den Höchsten von ganzem Gemüte*, BWV 174

Musical notation for Example 6, showing a bass line with a boxed G2 note. The notation is in bass clef and includes the lyrics "hän - de, faßt das Heil, greifet zu, faßt das Heil, ihr Glau - tend - ed, hold it fast, guard it well, hold it fast with hands". The boxed note is a G2 note, labeled "unstressed low note" above it.

One of the bass solo arias by Bach has a wider range than the other bass arias: this is “Wie will ich lustig lachen” from *Zerreiet, zersprenget, zertrmmert die Gruft*, BWV 205. This secular aria contains a high tessitura and a two-octave voice range, F#2 to F#4. In measure 49, Bach writes a two-octave descending melodic phrase from F#4 to F#2. The lowest note is short and

unstressed; nevertheless, this note is more demanding for a young baritone because he needs to carry a singing voice of two octaves within one measure. The two octave passing shows in Example 7 below:

Example 7: mm. 48-49 of “Wie will ich lustig lachen” from *Zerreiet, zersprenget, zertrmmert die Gruft*, BWV 205



Selecting the proper range and tessitura of bass arias depends on both the comfortable and the maximum voice ranges of singers. If a collegiate baritone singer develops a secure high and low voice, he can sing most of Bach’s bass vocal works, including the two-octave aria discussed above. According to the length of both the lowest note and the highest note from each bass aria and whether it is unstressed or a passing-tone note, an appropriate voice range for each level of bass solos can be extended. Below is Figure 4, showing the extended ranges if the lowest or highest note is short, unstressed, or passing-tone:

Figure 4: Extended range for each level of arias if lowest or highest notes are unstressed and short

	Normal range	Extended range
Beginning level	B2 to D4	B \flat 2 to E4
Intermediate level	A2 to E4	A \flat 2 to F4
Advanced level	A2 to F#4	G2 to F#4
Pre-professional	A \flat 2 to G4	F#2 to G4

Since the ranges and tessituras of Bach's vocal works for bass solo are significant factors in categorizing this study's different levels of bass repertoire for collegiate baritone, the issue of tuning for Baroque music is a factor in the suitability of this repertoire for baritone voice. Many Baroque ensembles tune to A415, one half-step below modern pitch, A440, or even lower, as many musicology courses in undergraduate music school instruct.¹⁴ However, in *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music*, Robert Donington points out that "the belief in a prevailing Baroque pitch about a semitone below A440 has not stood up to careful examination. There was no prevailing pitch in Baroque period"¹⁵ Furthermore, according to Arthur Mendel, "we must keep clearly in mind the fact that pitch varied, at a given date, from town to town, and even from church to church within the same town."¹⁶ For example, "Was des Höchsten Glanz erfüllt" is a bass cantata aria from *Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest*, BWV 194, which contains an unusual high voice range. The range of the bass aria is D3 to G4. Below is Example 8, showing the high range in the first melody:

¹⁴ James D. Robinson, "Selected Sacred Solo Literature for the Baritone Voice from the Baroque Period" (Doctoral diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990), 11.

¹⁵ Robert Donington, *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music* (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1973), 44.

¹⁶ Arthur Mendel, "On the Pitches in Use in Bach's Time I," *The Musical Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (1955): 333.

Example 8: mm. 5-12 of “Was des Höchsten Glanz erfüllt” from *Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest*, BWV 194

5 Basso. Was des Höchsten Glanz er - füllt, wird in — kei - ne Nacht ver -

7 hüllt, —

9 was des Höchsten Glanz er - füllt, — wird in kei - ne Nacht ver -

11 hüllt, wird in kei - ne Nacht ver - hüllt,

Arthur Mendel observed in “On the Pitches in Use in Bach’s Time” that:

From Bach’s own inscription on the autograph score of Cantata 194, as well as from other documentary evidence, that this cantata was written to celebrate the inauguration of a new organ in Störmthal, near Leipzig, on November 2, 1723. Direct evidence on the pitch of this organ is lacking. But there is circumstantial evidence of a striking nature. The vocal parts in this cantata have an exceptionally high range: soprano, “d¹ – c³” [D4 to C6]; alto, “b – e b²” [B3 to Eb5]; tenor, “e b – a¹” [Eb3 to A4]; bass, “B b – g¹” [Bb2 to G4]. Now if only one or two of the voices, in solo arias, had exceptionally high ranges, we might say that Bach must have had exceptional singers available for this work. But the high notes for soprano and bass occur not only in the solo arias, but in the choral parts. And while the upper limits for alto and tenor are not unusually high, the lower limits are. Accordingly, we can only conclude that the pitch of the Störmthal organ was unusually low, and Bach’s notation took account of this fact.¹⁷

Furthermore, Arthur Mendel indicates that both tuning pitches in eighteenth-century Berlin and Vienna were about A441, which is almost the same as our present pitch standards.¹⁸ Mendel’s

¹⁷ Ibid., 346, 347.

¹⁸ Arthur Mendel, “On the Pitches in Use in Bach’s Time II,” *The Musical Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (1955): 466.

research concludes that the pitch for church works by Bach in Leipzig is, in fact, A440 in all probability, which means the Leipzig cantatas were likely performed at the same pitch we use.¹⁹ For the purpose of this dissertation for collegiate singers and their voice teachers rather than professional Baroque singers, a modern piano tuned to an A440 pitch standard will be used in the DMA lecture recital. Nonetheless, it is essential that baritone singers need to be aware of the possibility that music may sound one half-step lower when they perform with Baroque ensembles.

¹⁹ Ibid., 479, 480.

CHAPTER 4

FOUR GROUPS OF BASS SOLOS CATEGORIZED FOR COLLEGIATE BARITONE

This research categorizes Bach's bass vocal repertoire into four groups for collegiate baritone voice students by not only range and tessitura, but also level of demand upon vocal agility, breath management to carry long melodic lines, length of melisma, difficulty of ornamentations and articulations, and frequency of accidental marks. According to Audrey Davidson, singers who perform early vocal music need to better comprehend the vocal mechanism than for other historical practices, because singing early music requires more flexibility and accuracy.²⁰ Also, many of Bach's vocal works contain long melodic phrases including long agile melismas requiring good breath control, which is not suitable for young voice students in their freshman or sophomore year. Joseph Klein emphasizes in his book *Singing Technique* that a good singer must have an extraordinary breathing skill in order to correctly provide support, even though breathing is as natural as is running for human beings.²¹ A lot of ornamentations and accidental marks can disturb the foundation of vocal technique for beginners such as good support, *legato* singing, and making equality of tone color. Therefore, choosing vocal repertoire according to the level of a student's singing technique is one of most important jobs for voice teachers.

Performing Bach's vocal music requires not only an excellent singing technique but also a suitable understanding of Baroque music and its style. Katie Sullivan states that "when considering Baroque music, a musician is faced with numerous challenges due to differences in

²⁰ Audrey E. Davidson, *Aspects of Early Music and Performance* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 2008), 187.

²¹ Joseph J. Klein, *Singing Technique: How to Avoid Vocal Trouble* (California: National Music Publishers, 1981), 9.

modern and Baroque musical notation and many stylistic elements.”²² As the college student gradually acquires both knowledge of the history of Baroque music and a habit of practical listening to Baroque music, they will have a better sense of Baroque styles. Singers need to focus not only on their melody lines but also on harmonic space with the instrumentalist to create a unified color. James McKinney indicates that:

The singer must learn that he is but another member of the instrumental ensemble, and that he is expected to exhibit the same rhythmic integrity required of such ensemble performers. It is essential that he avoid the inherent tendency of all singers to re-enter behind the beat after taking a breath. In music which is so contrapuntally organized, failure to preserve the underlying rhythmic pulsation can result in chaos.²³

Furthermore, basic German language and German diction classes, at least, are necessary for voice students to sing Bach’s vocal music, due to the fact that most of Bach’s vocal compositions are written in the German language.

Through the development a student’s singing technique and knowledge Baroque style, the student will progress to the upper level of more challenging vocal repertoire. For collegiate baritones and their voice teachers, this document suggests two arias and two ariosos for beginners, nine arias and two ariosos for intermediate students, thirty-eight arias for advanced students, and twenty-nine arias and one arioso for pre-professional singers. A total eighty-three out of 155 vocal works for bass solo from BWV 1 to BWV 249, about half of bass solo repertoire from Bach, will be suitable for modern baritone voice. A list of seventy-three arias and five ariosos for the baritone voice are displayed in the appendix. In the following discussion, this research examines eight selected arias and ariosos in order to demonstrate how it works for each level of vocal repertoire.

²² Katie Sullivan, “A Singer’s Guide to J. S. Bach’s Cantata *Jauchzet Gott in Allen Landen*, BWV 51” (MM diss., California State University, 2014), 1.

²³ McKinney, “The Solo Bass Voice in the Cantatas of J. S. Bach”, 189.

4.1. Beginning Level

To perform Baroque music, singers require advanced singing technique, vocal freedom, and accuracy; therefore, it is difficult to find the proper vocal piece by Bach for beginners.

However, there are two secular bass arias from *Mer hahn en neue Oberkeet*, BWV 212, known as the *Peasant Cantata*, and two cantata ariosos from BWV 81 and BWV 154 which are suitable for freshmen or pre-collegiate students who have a baritone voice.

1) “Es nehme zehn tausend Dukaten” from *Mer hahn en neue Oberkeet*, BWV 212

- Type: Secular cantata aria
- Range: D3 – D4
- Tessitura: Approximately G3 – B3
- Length of aria: Approximately 30 seconds
- Length of Melisma: Mostly syllabic
- Level of vocal agility: Low
- Dance rhythm: Giga(gigue)-like²⁴
- Composition date and place: 1742, Leipzig

This short secular aria contains a perfect one octave vocal range, D3 to D4, and a simple giga-like dance rhythm for middle voice range students. According to Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, the characteristics of *giga* (gigue) rhythm are duple subdivision of ternary figures, joyful affection, jiggling rhythms, long phrases with few caesuras, and a dance-like lilt.²⁵ See the melody line of the aria in Example 9 below:

²⁴ Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J. S. Bach*, Expanded ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001). 305.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 275.

Example 9: mm. 1-16 of “Es nehme zehn tausend Dukaten” from BWV 212

Basso. 1
Es nehme zehntausend Du - ka - ten der Kammerherr al - le Tag' ein, es

5
nehme zehntausend Du - ka - ten der Kammerherr al - le Tag' ein. Er

9
trink' ein gu - tes Gläs - chen Wein und lass' es ihm be - kommen sein; es

13
nehme zehntausend Du - ka - ten der Kammerherr al - le Tag' ein.

As mentioned previously, one big challenge of this aria for beginners is the German language. If a student has difficulty singing in German, he can start practicing with five standard vowels (a, e, i, o, u) one at a time instead of the text. When he has mastered the text, the student can practice with different voice colors or dynamics for each repetition of the melody line. Bach wrote a six-measure recitative before this aria; it is a fine example for beginners to learn the style of Baroque recitative. Below is the recitative, “Das is zu klug vor dich,” in Example 10:

Example 10: mm. 1-6 of “Das is zu klug vor dich” from BWV 212

Recitativo.

Basso. 1
Das ist zu klug vor dich und nach der Städter Weise; wir Bauern singen nicht so
4
lei-se. Das Stückchen, hö-re nur, das schi-cket sich vor mich.

For the end of the recitativo, the student can learn one of most important ornamental devices in the Baroque period, the *appoggiatura*, and use it on the word, “mich” in measure 6. See Example 11 below:

Example 11: Appoggiatura on “mich” in mm. 5-6 of “Das is zu klug vor dich” from BWV 212

5
nur, das schi-cket sich vor mich.
appoggiatura

2) “Wisset ihr nicht” from *Mein liebster Jesus ist verloren*, BWV 154

- Type: Sacred cantata arioso
- Range: B2 – E4
- Tessitura: Approximately E3 – B3
- Length of aria: Approximately 1 minute 30 seconds
- Length of Melisma: Short
- Level of vocal agility: Low
- Text: Luke 2:49
- Composition date and place: 1724, Leipzig

Bach extracted the text for this arioso from Luke chapter two verse forty-nine: “Wisset ihr nicht, dass ich sein muss in dem, meines Vaters ist?” (Did you not know that I must be about my father’s business?). Bach wrote a theme in the key of F# minor for the vocal line in measures 1-3. See Example 12, showing the theme, below:

Example 12: The vocal theme in mm. 1-4 of “Wisset ihr nicht” from BWV 154

Arioso.

Basso. 1
Wis.set ihr nicht, dass ich sein muss in dem, das mei.nes Va . . ters ist?

Bach modified and extended this theme of this arioso three more times in different keys: C# minor - E major - F# minor. In measure 4, Bach changed the key to C# minor and wrote an extension of the theme. Below is the first extended theme in measures 4-10 in Example 13:

minor scale on “Va-” from C#3 to D4, with which a young baritone can develop his one-octave scale singing. The scale is shown in Example 15 below:

Example 15: One-octave-like scale in mm. 19-20 of “Wisset ihr nicht” from BWV 154



The student must be careful to sing the correct pitch of the D#3 in measure 19, and D4 natural in measure 20 while he sings the phrase. See Example 16 below:

Example 16: mm. 19-20 of “Wisset ihr nicht” from BWV 154



4.2. Intermediate Level

For the intermediate and higher levels, accuracy and tonal beauty is essential in performing Baroque vocal music. If a voice student's vibrato is wide or uncontrolled, preventing

the clear intonation of the vocal line, his voice may not be suitable for singing Bach.²⁶ In *Aspects of Early Music and Performance*, Audrey Davidson indicates that:

Normally whenever vibrato is used in early music it must be used with great caution and restraint. ... If vibrato is used in polyphonic music, it can cause great disturbance of the vertical sonorities. ... Voices with uncontrolled vibrato create unpleasant clashings of sound. ... Vibrato used as an ornament in such songs is often intrinsic to the style and adds to the pleasure of the listener.²⁷

Depending on the style of Baroque music a well-trained singer can easily switch from singing without vibrato, or commonly known as "straight tone" to tones employing vibrato. Also, the student needs to acquire a better sense of German diction and language to express the meaning of the text.

1) "Betrachte, meine Seel, mit ängstlichem Vergnügen" from *Johannes-Passion*, BWV 245

- Type: Passion oratorio arioso
- Range: Bb2 – Eb4
- Tessitura: Approximately Eb3 – C4
- Length of aria: Approximately 2 minutes 30 seconds
- Length of Melisma: Mostly syllabic
- Level of vocal agility: Low but many accidental marks and big intervals
- Composition date and place: 1724, Leipzig

Before singing this bass arioso, a voice student should be required to understand the dramatic progression of the scene in the *St. John Passion* and the poetic expressions of contrasting words in the text. In the scene before this arioso, Pilate tells the crowd he will release one prisoner in keeping with Jewish custom, and they all cry out and ask Pilate to release Barabbas, a murderer, instead of Jesus. Pilate takes Jesus and scourges him; the Evangelist describes the suffering of Jesus on "geisselte" (lash out) with a long melisma in conjunction with

²⁶ Paul Steinitz, *Performing Bach's Vocal Music* (Croydon: Addington Press, 1980), 48.

²⁷ Audrey E. Davidson, *Aspects of Early Music and Performance*, 85.

a combination of sixteenth notes and triplets in the recitative. See this recitative of Evangelist in Example 17 below:

Example 17: mm. 1-6 of “Barrabas aber war ein Mörder” from BWV 245

1 Evangelist
Bar-ra-bas a - ber war ein Mör-der. Da nahm Pi - la-tus Je-sum und gei- - - - -
4 - ssel-te ihn!

In accordance with this dramatic progression of the biblical story, Bach wrote the bass arioso to come right after the recitative. The arioso contains contrasting words, such as “ängstlichem Vergnügen” (anxious delight), “bitterer Lust” (bitter pleasure), and “Dein höchstes Gut in Jesu Schmerzen” (your highest good depends on Jesus’ sorrow), which dramatically illustrates Christ's suffering and the hope of Christians. A voice student must understand the spiritual meaning of these words to express both negative and positive emotions from the text.

Matching the complicated feelings in the arioso, Bach put many accidental marks in this aria. Moreover, the instrumental parts do not double the vocal part, which makes it more difficult for a student to sing his vocal line. Therefore, the student must be precise and sing the correct pitches. See accidentals in Example 18 below:

Example 18: Accidentals in mm. 3-11 of “Betrachte, meine Seel, mit ängstlichem Vergnügen” from BWV 245

3
Seel', mit ängst-lich-em Ver-gnü-gen, mit bit-tern Lasten hart be-klemmt von Herzen, dein

6
höch-stes Gut in Je-su Schmer-zen, wie dir auf

8
Dor-nen, so ihn ste-chen, die Him-mels-schlüs-sel-blü-me blüht; du

10
kannst viel sü-sse Frucht von sel-ner Wer-mut bre-chen, drum

The image displays a musical score for a vocal piece with piano accompaniment. It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in bass clef, and the piano accompaniment is in treble and bass clefs. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is common time (C). The score is annotated with circled accidentals (sharps and flats) and asterisks with the word 'Red.' below them, indicating redactions. The lyrics are in German and are placed below the vocal line. The systems are numbered 3, 6, 8, and 10. The first system starts with a treble clef and a key signature change to B-flat major. The second system starts with a bass clef and a key signature change to B-flat major. The third system starts with a bass clef and a key signature change to B-flat major. The fourth system starts with a bass clef and a key signature change to B-flat major.

As an additional exercise, the voice teacher may use this selection to develop the student's *legato* singing skill. At the end of this arioso, the melody descends from Eb4 to Bb2; the student should endeavor to sing *legato* from while descending through the range without pushing on the lowest note of the phrase. See Example 19 below:

Example 19: mm. 14-15 of “Betrachte, meine Seel, mit ängstlichem Vergnügen” from BWV 245

The image shows a musical score for a bass line. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The music starts at measure 14, indicated by a '14' above the staff. The lyrics are: "Un - ter - lass auf Ihn, ohn' Un - - - ter - lass auf Ihn, ohn' Un - ter - lass auf". A red rectangular box highlights the final notes of the phrase, which are a descending eighth-note scale: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1.

2) “Herr, so du willst” from *Herr, wie du willst, so schicks mit mir*, BWV 73

- Type: Sacred cantata aria
- Range: C3 – Eb4
- Tessitura: Approximately Eb3 – C4
- Length of aria: Approximately 3 minutes 30 seconds
- Length of Melisma: Mostly syllabic
- Level of vocal agility: Medium
- Rhythm: Sarabande-like
- Composition date and place: 1724, Leipzig

The range of this sacred bass aria, between C3 and Eb4, is a suitable range for collegiate baritone voice. If a student struggles with his low notes like A2 and Bb2, he may choose this aria because the lowest note of this aria is only C3. However, he needs to be aware of the low G2 note in the previous *basso* recitative, “Ach, unser Wille bleibt verkehrt.” Below is Example 20, showing the G2 note at the end of recitative:

Example 20: mm. 6-8 of “Ach, unser Wille bleibt verkehrt” from BWV 73

6
 Got_tes Geist ge_lehrt, lernt sich in Got_tes Wil_len sen_ken und sagt:
 Attacca.

The low G note on “und” (and) is not a stressed note, nor does it have an important meaning, so the student may sing the G softly while emphasizing the next note, Eb3, on “sagt” (says). Both bass aria and recitative are performed together because of an *attacca* at the end of the recitative.

Bach modified the main theme of “Herr, so du willst,” (Lord, as you will) repeatedly throughout the entire of the aria. Below is the main theme in Example 21:

Example 21: The main theme of “Herr, so du willst” in mm. 1-2 from BWV 73

1
 Basso.
 Herr, so du willst,

Schlifer (slide), indicated by two small notes or w , is another common Baroque ornament that a singer may use to ornament the written melody. See Example 22 below:

Example 22: A *schleifer* in measure 26 of “Herr, so du willst” from BWV 73



Not only must the student understand the meaning of words and the proper pronunciation of the language, they must also learn to recognize stressed syllables and how to express them correctly. See Example 23, showing emphasized stressed syllables with the syncopated notes, below:

Example 23: Stressed syllables in mm. 13-17 of “Herr, so du willst” from BWV 73



4.3. Advanced Level

To perform the arias at the advanced level, a voice student requires good training in vocal techniques like *legato* singing and breath control. Furthermore, the singer should be able to focus not only on his vocal part but also on the instrumental parts to listen to the harmonic structures. As he develops his knowledge about the structure of Baroque music its style, he can add more ornaments since “ornamentation is not a luxury in Baroque music, but a necessity” according to

Robert Donington.²⁸ The singer, however, needs to be careful not to distract from the meaning of the text nor disturb the harmonic structure with the instrumentalists by adding too many embellishments. On using ornamentations, Donington states that “keep it flexible; but keep it within the boundaries of the style.”²⁹

1) “Nichts ist es spat und frühe” from *In allen meinen Taten*, BWV 97

- Type: Sacred cantata aria
- Range: Bb2 – Eb4
- Tessitura: Approximately D3 – D4
- Length of aria: Approximately 3 minutes 30 seconds
- Length of Melisma: Medium
- Level of vocal agility: Medium
- Composition date and place: 1734, Leipzig

The rhythmic pattern of this aria is very similar to the giga-like dance rhythm in “Es nehme zehntausend Dukaten” from BWV 212 in Example 9. However, it is unexpected that this aria uses a giga-like dance rhythm because of its sacred text. The characteristics of giga (gigue) dance contain joyful and intense jiggling rhythms, which is opposite to the text of this aria. See Example 24, showing a similar rhythmic passage between this sacred aria and the secular aria, “Es nehme zehntausend Dukaten,” below:

²⁸ Donington, *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music*, 160.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

Example 24: A similar rhythmic pattern in “Es nehme zehntausend Dukaten” from BWV 212 and “Nichts ist es spat und frühe” from BWV 97

1
Secular aria from BWV 212
Es nehme zehntausend Du - ka - ten der Kammerherral.le Tag' ein, es

12
Sacred aria from BWV 97
Nichts ist es spat und frü - he um al - le mei.ne Mü - he, mein

The melody line starts with D4, which is quite high as a starting note for baritone voice. The student needs to sing softly on the first note and sing *legato* throughout to connect with the next D4 note on “frühe” (early) and the C4 on “Mühe” (effort). See Example 25 below:

Example 25: Legato singing in mm. 12-16 of “Nichts ist es spat und frühe” from BWV 97

12
Basso.
Nichts ist es spat und frü - he um al - le mei.ne Mü - he, mein

In the measures between 31 and 34, Bach put a melismatic passage with a syncopated rhythm on “Sorgen” (ensure). This vocal line presents an opportunity to practice singing an extended melismatic vocal line with challenging intervallic leaps as well as steps, and syncopated rhythms. See Example 26 below:

Example 26: Melismatic vocal line in mm. 31-35 of “Nichts ist es spat und frühe” from BWV 97



2) “Mache dich, mein Herze, rein” from *Matthäus-Passion*, BWV 244

- Type: Passion oratorio aria
- Range: A2 – Eb4
- Tessitura: approximately C3 – Bb3
- Length of aria: Approximately 6 minutes
- Length of Melisma: Medium
- Level of vocal agility: Medium
- Composition date and place: 1727, Leipzig

This aria from the *St. Matthew Passion* appears in conjunction with the eighteen-measure recitative, “Am Abend, da es kühle war.” The range of this aria is between A2 and Eb4; however, the singer needs to be aware of the low G note on “abendstunde” (evening hours) in the recitative. The range of the recitative is G2 to Eb4. The singer can add an *appoggiatura* on the first G note to approach the lowest note. See Example 27, showing the low G notes in measure 9, below:

Example 27: Low G note in mm. 7-9 of “Am Abend, da es kühle war” from BWV 244



The initial melody of this aria, “Mache dich, mein Herze, rein” (make yourself pure, my heart), contains a long note on “rein” (pure). The singer may begin with a straight-tone and piano sound, and gradually add vibrato and *crescendo* on the long note to describe the meaning of word. The instrumental parts help to make a *crescendo* on the long note. See Example 28, showing the switch in the voice from straight-tone to vibrato in measures 10-11, below:

Example 28: Changing straight-tone to vibrato in mm. 10-11 of “Mache dich, mein Herze, rein” from BWV 244

straight-tone - vibrato

10

B.

rein,

p

In measures 13 and 14 (and also 19 and 20), Bach possibly used word painting on the melody line, “ich will Jesum selbst be graben” (I want to bury Jesus himself within me). The movement of the melody illustrates shoveling into one’s heart as he buries Jesus into his mind. This descending passage of the melody, Eb3 – D – C, portrays digging into the ground or heart deeper and deeper. See Example 29 below:

Example 29: Word painting of shoveling in mm. 13-15 of “Mache dich, mein Herze, rein” from BWV 244

13

B. rein, ... ich will Je-sum selbst be-gra-ben, ich will Je-sum selbst be-gra-ben,

Eb - Eb - D - D - C - C

The singer and the instrumentalist need to make the same ornamentation to create a unified performance. In measure 15, there is a trill mark for both the voice and instrumental parts. Both performers need to make the same style of trill. Below is Example 30, showing the trill mark:

Example 30: Same trill mark on both voice and instrumental parts in measure 15 of “Mache dich, mein Herze, rein” from BWV 244

14

B. gra-ben, ich will Je-sum selbst be-gra-ben,

4.4. Pre-Professional Level

To perform the pre-professional level of Bach’s vocal works, it is necessary for a voice student to acquire a high level of vocal agility, breath management, and wider vocal range to sing extremely long melismas. This group of pre-professional-level vocal pieces has higher ranges

Example 32: A high range of long melisma in mm. 82-88 of “Zurücke, zurücke, geflügelten Winde” from BWV 205

The singer needs to sing lightly for these high range melismas rather than making full voice with the chest register. In accordance with John Butt’s *Music Education and the Art of Performance in the German Baroque*, “the singer should not push out the faster notes or so-called coloraturas through a movement of the lips or tongue, but he should perform them with the lungs and throat so that they can be heard clearly and distinctly.”³¹ The singer can slowly practice making correct pitches with different vowels (a-e-i-o-u).

In contrast, Bach put a syllabic note on “besänftiget” (softened) to illustrate the softened wind. The singer may put a trill at the end of the long note. See Example 33 below:

Example 33: A possible trill in mm. 150-156 of “Zurücke, zurücke, geflügelten Winde” from BWV 205

³¹ John Butt, *Music Education and the Art of Performance in the German Baroque* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 122.

2) “Gratias agimus tibi” from *Mass in G Major*, BWV 236

- Type: Mass aria
- Text: Latin Mass
- Range: A2 – E4
- Tessitura: Approximately D3 – D4
- Length of aria: Approximately 5 minutes
- Length of Melisma: Extremely Long
- Level of vocal agility: High
- Composition date and place: 1738, Leipzig

This Lutheran *missa* aria in Latin is suitable for both baritone and bass-baritone voices. Bach wrote an extremely long melisma on “Gloria” to possibly express his faith as a Christian and to give a vocal representation of the glory and majesty of God. This long melisma requires the highest levels of vocal agility and breath control. It is almost impossible to sing in one breath. Accordingly, the singer needs to find appropriate places to take a short breath. See Example 34, showing possible places to take a breath, below:

Example 34: mm. 128-146 of “Gratias agimus tibi” from BWV 236

128
pro - pter ma - gnam glo -

133
- ri - am, pro - pter ma - gnam glo -

138
- ri - am, pro - pter ma - gnam glo -

142
- ri - am tu - am.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Many voice teachers use Italian songs from the *Arie antiche* by Alessandro Parisotti (1853-1913), published between 1885 and 1888, as a standard vocal training material for young singers to instruct *legato* singing and *bel canto* style. The term *bel canto* literally means “beautiful singing,” and this kind of singing style flourished during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe. The *Arie antiche*, a collection of songs by Parisotti, contains vocal pieces by Baroque composers such as Alessandro Scarlatti (1659-1725), Antonio Caldara (1671-1763), and Giorgio Federico Handel (1684-1759) but not J. S. Bach. However, Robert Donington emphasizes regarding Bach’s vocal music that “most musicians are aware that Handel expected great vocal feats in his Italianate cantatas and operas: but they may not be so well aware that Bach’s cantatas and Passions are in the same basically operatic idiom and require the same technique of voice production.”³² Moreover, Donington mentions the importance of *bel canto* for Baroque vocal works:

The contemporary descriptions of great nineteenth-century singers, backed by the scratchy but incontrovertible evidence of their primitive recordings, are sufficient to give us an accurate idea of *bel canto* in its last period of perfection. The descriptions of great baroque singers are so remarkably similar to the nineteenth-century descriptions that we may believe these earlier periods of *bel canto* to have used essentially the same technique. It will therefore be my assumption here that we need to recover the normal technique of Italian *bel canto* as fully as possible in order to give the finest performances of Monteverdi, Carissimi, Purcell, Bach or Handel.³³

Of course, Bach’s cantata and oratorio arias are not easy for young college-level singers. Many voice students and their voice teachers seem to avoid Bach’s vocal works because of their

³² Donington, *A Performer’s Guide to Baroque Music*, 69.

³³ *Ibid.*, 53.

difficulty. Nevertheless, collegiate singers cannot lose an opportunity to learn abundant vocal works and musical artworks by Bach. Rosalyn Tureck points out that “When I repeat Bach over and over there is never a weariness. It’s always finding new things.”³⁴ If a singer sincerely keeps practicing and researching Bach’s music, he can find a true joy as Tureck found. Hopefully, this guideline from the beginning level to pre-professional level of bass solo works by Bach will help baritone voice singers who love the music of Bach to assist their studies of Bach as a reference material. As Bach said, “I have had to be diligent. If anyone will be equally diligent, he will be able to accomplish just as much.”³⁵

Depending on a voice student’s singing capability and his voice teacher’s guidelines, these suggested bass solo arias and ariosos in this study could be switched between groups. Also, if a baritone singer has a wider vocal range and stable low and high notes, he will be capable of more vocal repertoire by Bach. Other practicable studies, related to the topic of this dissertation, will be Bach’s vocal works for modern bass-baritone and bass voice or Bach’s tenor arias for baritone voice. As many musicologists and musicians continually research on Bach’s compositions, there is a big possibility that more vocal pieces for bass solo will be added or removed.

Finally, it is enthusiastically hoped that this documentation will be helpful to collegiate voice students and voice teachers. Furthermore, as Bach himself wrote on his manuscripts, *Soli Deo Gloria*.

³⁴ Ibid., 28.

³⁵ Wilibald Glulitt, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Master and His Work*, trans. Oliver C. Rupprecht (New York: Da Capo Press, 1986), 8.

APPENDIX A

CATALOG OF SUITABLE BASS ARIAS BY J. S. BACH FOR COLLEGE BARITONE

The tessitura code is as follows:

L – Low

ML – Moderately Low

M – Moderate

MH – Moderately High

H – High

The length of melisma and its code are as follows:

MS (Mostly syllabic): Almost syllabic with several connected notes

S (Short): Approximately less than two measures

M (Medium): Approximately between three and four measures

L (Long): Approximately between five and six measures

EL (Extremely long): Approximately more than six measures

** Arias with moderate or high tessituras which contain low notes below A2.

1. Beginning level

BWV	No.	Name of aria (Beginning level)	Range	Tessitura	Melisma
[Arias from sacred cantatas]					
81	4	“Ihr Kleingläubigen, warum seid ihr so furchtsam?” (arioso)	B ₂ -D ₄	M	MS
154	5	“Wisset ihr nicht?” (arioso)	B ₂ -E ₄	M	S
[Arias from secular cantatas]					
212	12	“Fünzig Taler bares Geld”	B _{b2} -E _{b4}	ML	MS
212	16	“Es nehme zehntausend Dukaten”	D ₃ -D ₄	M	MS

2. Intermediate level

BWV	No.	Name of aria (Intermediate level)	Range	Tessitura	Melisma
[Arias from sacred cantatas]					
5	5	“Verstumme, Hollenheer”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	S
20	5	“Gott ist gerecht in seinen Werken”	B _{b2} -E _{b4}	M	S
28	3	“So spricht der Herr: Es soil mir eine Lust sein” (arioso)	B ₂ -E ₄	M	S
36	5	“Willkommen, werter Schatz”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	S
73	4	“Herr, so du willt”	C ₃ -E _{b4}	M	MS
153	3	“Fürchte dich nicht”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	MS
166	1	“Wo gehest du hin?”	A ₂ -E _{b4}	M	M
[Arias from secular cantatas]					
36c	5	“Der Tag, der dich vordem gebar”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	S
208	14	“Ihr Felder und Auen”	A ₂ -E ₄	MH	MS
212	6	“Ach, Herr Schösser, geht nicht gar zu schlimm”	D ₃ -E ₄	M	MS
[Arias from passions]					
245	19	“Betrachte, meine Seel, mit ängstlichem Vergnügen” (arioso) from the <i>St. John Passion</i>	B _{b2} -E _{b4}	M	MS

3. Advanced level

BWV	No.	Name of aria (Advanced level)	Range	Tessitura	Melisma
[Arias from sacred cantatas]					
7	2	“Merkt und hört ihr Menschenkinder”	A ₂ -E ₄	MH	S
8	4	“Doch weicht ihr tollen vergeblichen Sorgen”	A ₂ -E ₄	MH	S
25	3	“Ach, wo hol' ich Armer Rat”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
30	8	“Ich will nun hassen”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
37	5	“Der Glaube schafft der Seele Flügel”	A [#] ₂ -D ₄	M	M
42	6	“Jesus ist ein Schild der Seinen”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	L
49	2	“Ich geh' und suche mit Verlangen”	B ₂ -E ₄	M	L
82	1	**“Ich habe genug”	G ₂ - E _b ₄	MH	M
82	3	“Schlummert ein, ihr matten Augen”	B _b ₂ -E _b ₄	M	S
88	4	“Fürchte dich nicht”	A ₂ -D ₄	M	L
90	3	“So löschet im Eifer”	B _b ₂ -E _b ₄	M	S
94	2	“Die Welt ist wie ein Rauch”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
97	2	“Nichts ist es spat und frühe”	B _b ₂ -E _b ₄	M	M
107	3	“Auf ihn magst du es wagen”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
111	2	“Entsetze dich, mein Herze, nicht”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
113	3	“Fürwahr, wenn mir das kömmet ein”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
117	6	“Wenn Trost und Hülf ermangeln muss”	B ₂ -E ₄	M	S
135	5	“Weicht, all ihr Ü beltäter”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
145	5	“Merke, mein Herze, beständig nur dies”	A ₂ -E ₄	H	M
163	3	“Lass mein Herz die Münze sein”	A ₂ -D ₄	M	S
174	4	**“Greifet zu, fasst das Heil”	G ₂ -E ₄	MH	S
197	6	**“O du angenehmes Paar”	G ₂ -E ₄	MH	S

BWV	No.	Name of aria (Advanced level)	Range	Tessitura	Melisma
[Arias from secular cantatas]					
30a	7	“Ich will dich halten und mit dir walten”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	S
201	7	“Zu Tanze, zu Sprunge, so wackelt das Herz”	A ₂ -E ₄	H	M
208	7	“Ein Fürst ist seines Landes Pan”	A ₂ -D ₄	M	S
211	2	“Hat man nicht mit seinen Kindern”	B ₂ -E ₄	M	MS
211	6	“Mädchen, die von harten Sinnen”	B ₂ -E ₄	MH	S
212	20	“Dein Wachstum sei feste”	A ₂ -E ₄	H	M
214	7	“Kron und Preis, gekrönter Damen”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
215	5	“Rase nur, verwegner Schwarm”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
[Arias from masses]					
234	3	“Domine Deus “ from the <i>Mass in A major</i>	A ₂ -E ₄	MH	S
243	5	**“Quia fecit mihi magna” from the <i>Magnificat</i>	G _{#2} -D _{#2}	M	M
[Arias from passions]					
244	42	**“Gebt mir meinen Jesum wieder” from the <i>St. Matthew Passion</i>	G ₂ -E ₄	M	S
244	57	“Komm, süßes Kreuz, so will ich sagen” from the <i>St. Matthew Passion</i>	A ₂ -E ₄	M	S
244	65	“Mache dich, mein Herze, rein” from the <i>St. Matthew Passion</i>	A ₂ -E _{b4}	M	M
245	32	“Mein teurer Heiland, laß dich fragen” from the <i>St. John Passion</i>	A ₂ -E ₄	M	S
[Arias from oratorios]					
248	8	“Großer Herr und starker König” from the <i>Christmas Oratorio</i>	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
248	47	“Erleucht' auch meine finstre Sinnen” from the <i>Christmas Oratorio</i>	B ₂ -E ₄	MH	L

4. Pre-professional level

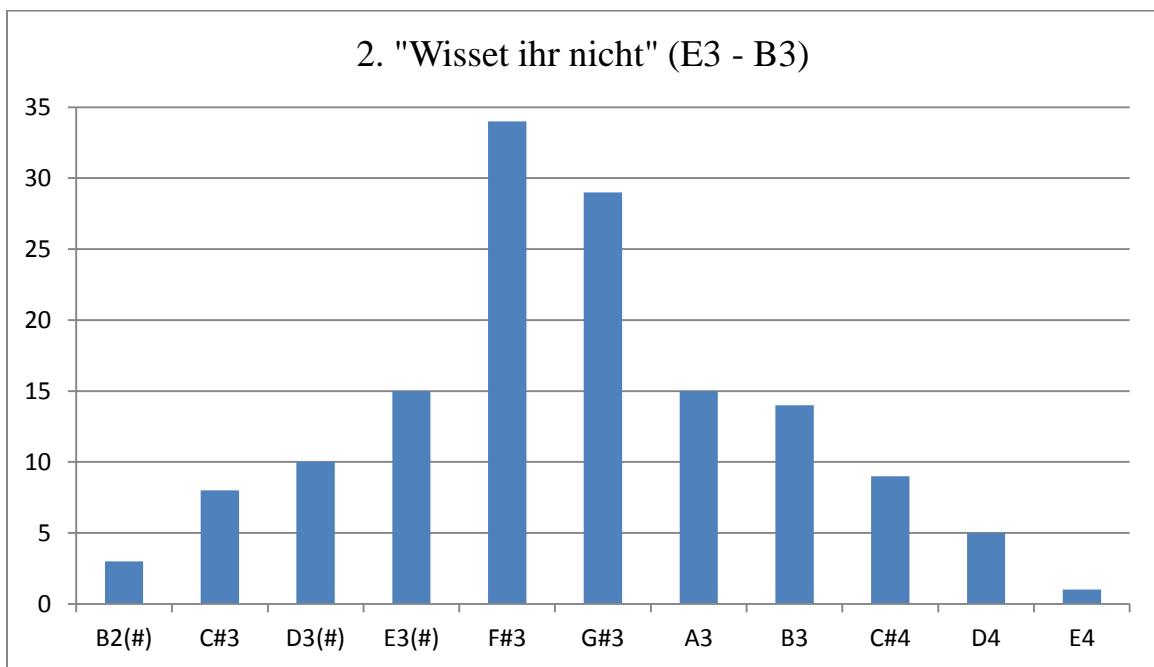
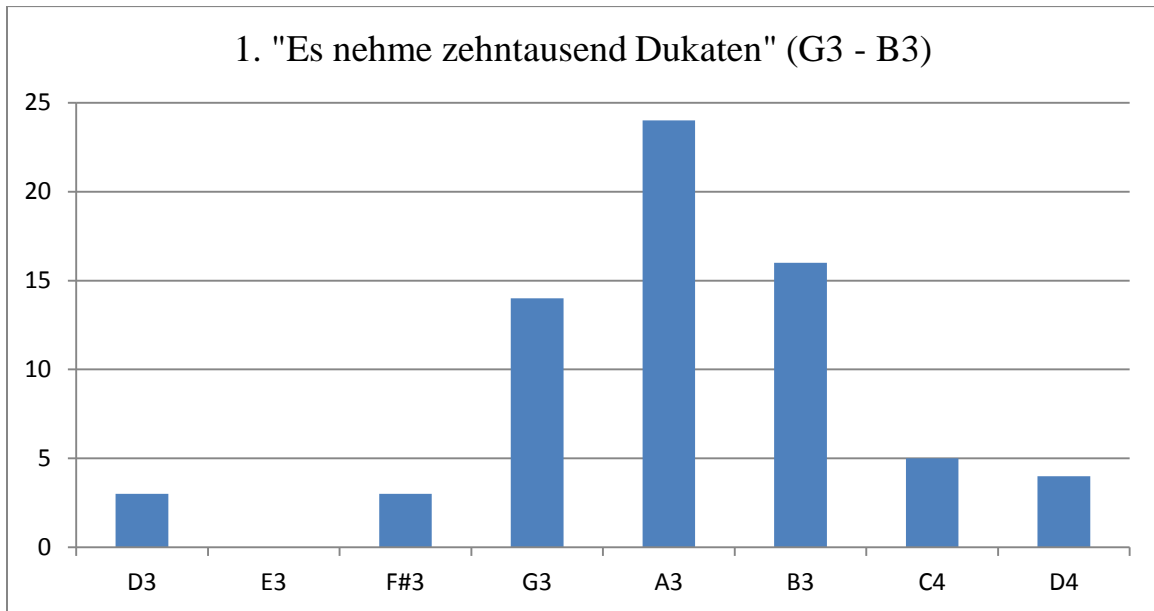
BWV	No.	Name of aria (Pre-professional level)	Range	Tessitura	Melisma
[Arias from sacred cantatas]					
30	3	“Gelobet sei Gott, gelobet sein Name”	A ₂ -E ₄	MH	EL
45	4	“Es werden viele zu mir sagen” (arioso)	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
46	3	“Dein Wetter zog sich auf von weiten”	B _{b2} -E ₄	M	EL
57	1	***“Selig ist der Mann”	G ₂ - E _{b4}	H	L
62	4	“Streite, siege, starker Held”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	L
66	3	“Lasset dem Höchsten ein Danklied erschallen”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	L
69	5	“Mein Erlöser und Erhalter”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	L
75	12	“Mein Herze glaubt und liebt”	C ₃ -F ₄	MH	M
92	6	“Das Brausen von der rauhen Winden”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	L
100	4	“Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	L
108	1	“Es ist euch gut, dass ich hingehe”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	L
129	2	“Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott, mein Heil”	A ₂ -E ₄	MH	EL
138	5	***“Auf Gott stent meine Zuversicht”	G _{#2} -E ₄	MH	EL
139	4	“Das Unglück schlägt auf alien Seiten”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	L
168	1	***“Tue Rechnung! Donnerwort”	G ₂ -E ₄	MH	M
175	6	“Ö ffnet euch ihr beiden Ohren”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
181	1	“Leichtgesinnte Flattergeister”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	S
194	3	“Was des Höchsten Glanz erfüllt”	D ₃ -G ₄	H	M
195	3	***“Rühmet Gottes Güt und Treu”	G ₂ -E ₄	M	L
197a	6	“Ich lasse dich nicht”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M

BWV	No.	Name of aria (Pre-professional level)	Range	Tessitura	Melisma
[Arias from secular cantatas]					
30a	3	“Willkommen in Heil, willkommen in Freuden”	A ₂ -E ₄	MH	EL
173a	3	“Leopolds Vortrefflichkeiten”	B ₂ -G ₄	H	MS
173a	7	“Dein Name gleich der Sonnen geh”	C ₃ -F ₄ ♯	H	EL
201	5	“Mit Verlangen drück ich deine zarten Wangen”	B ₂ -F ₄ ♯	MH	EL
203	1	“Amore traditore”	A ₂ -E ₄	M	M
203	3	***“Chi in amore”	G ₂ -E ₄	M	S
205	3	***“Wie will ich lustig lachen”	F ₂ ♯-F ₄ ♯	H	L
205	11	“Zurücke, zurücke, geflügelten Winde”	A ₂ -F ₄ ♯	MH	EL
[Arias from masses]					
232	18	***“Et in Spiritum sanctum” from the <i>Mass in B minor</i>	F ₂ ♯-E ₄	MH	L
236	3	“Gratias agimus tibi” from the <i>Mass in G major</i>	A ₂ -E ₄	MH	EL

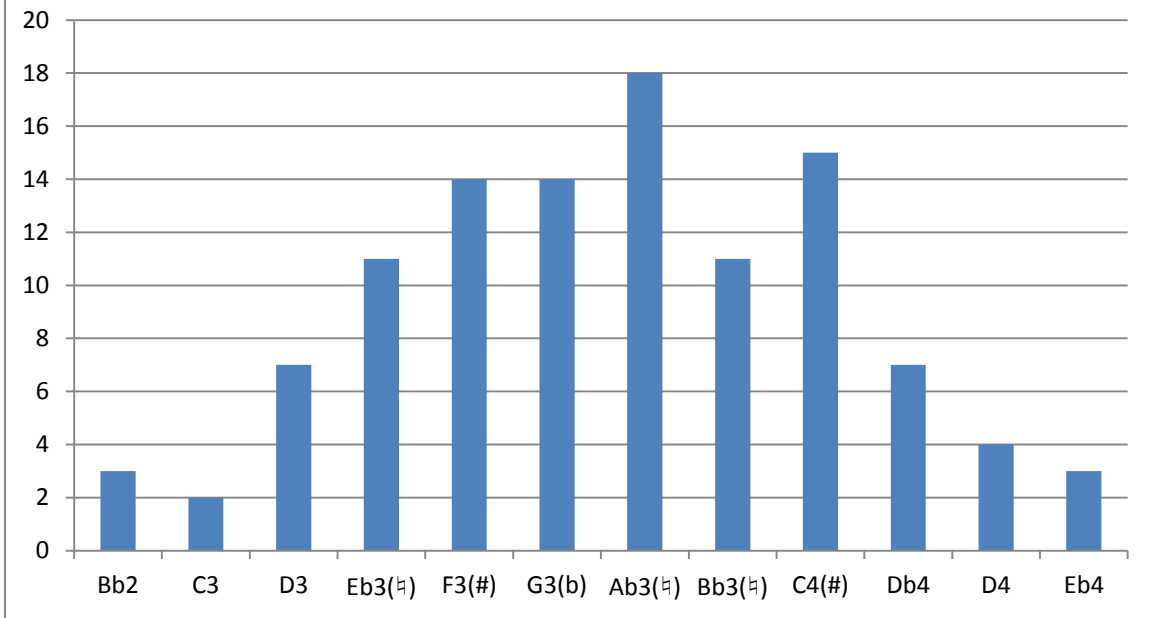
APPENDIX B

DETAILED TESSITURAS OF THE EIGHT SELECTED BASS SOLOS

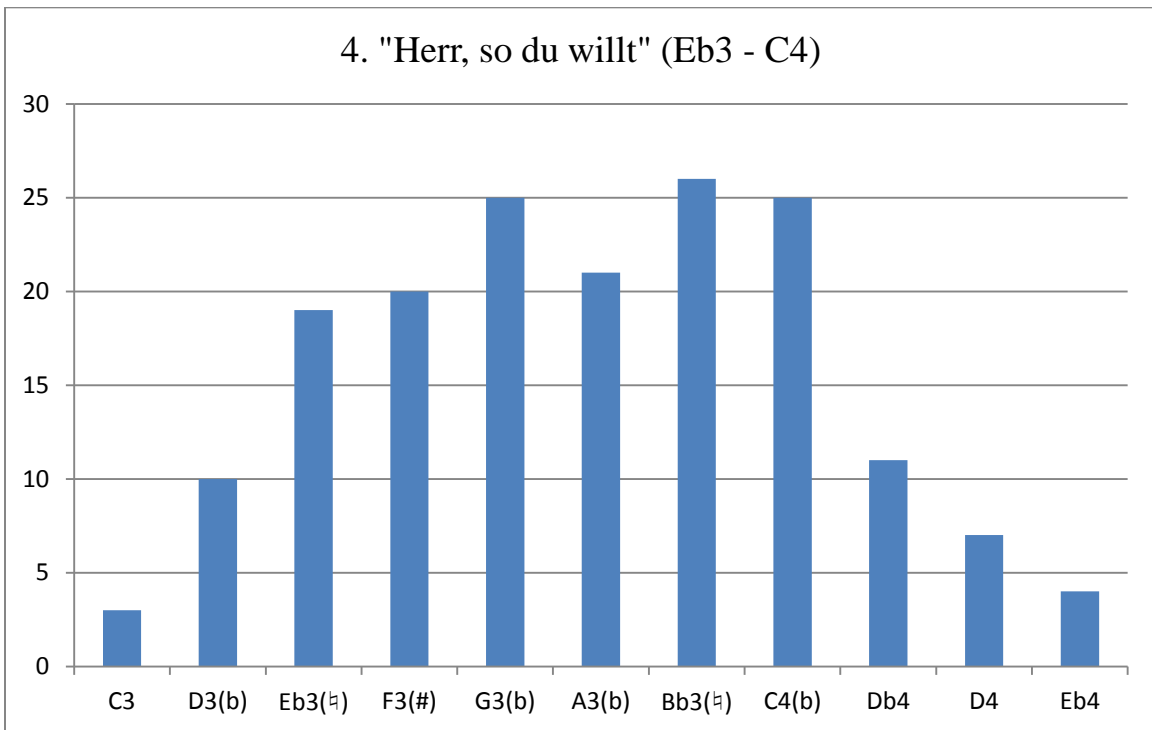
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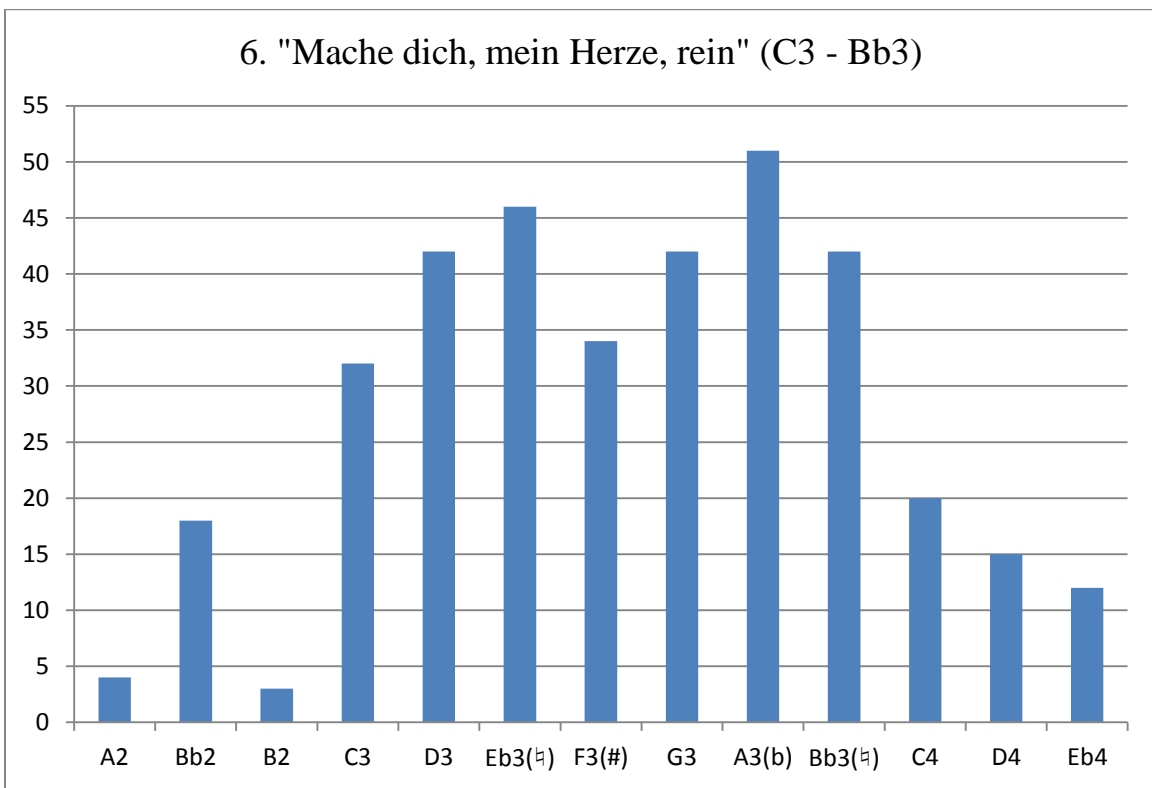
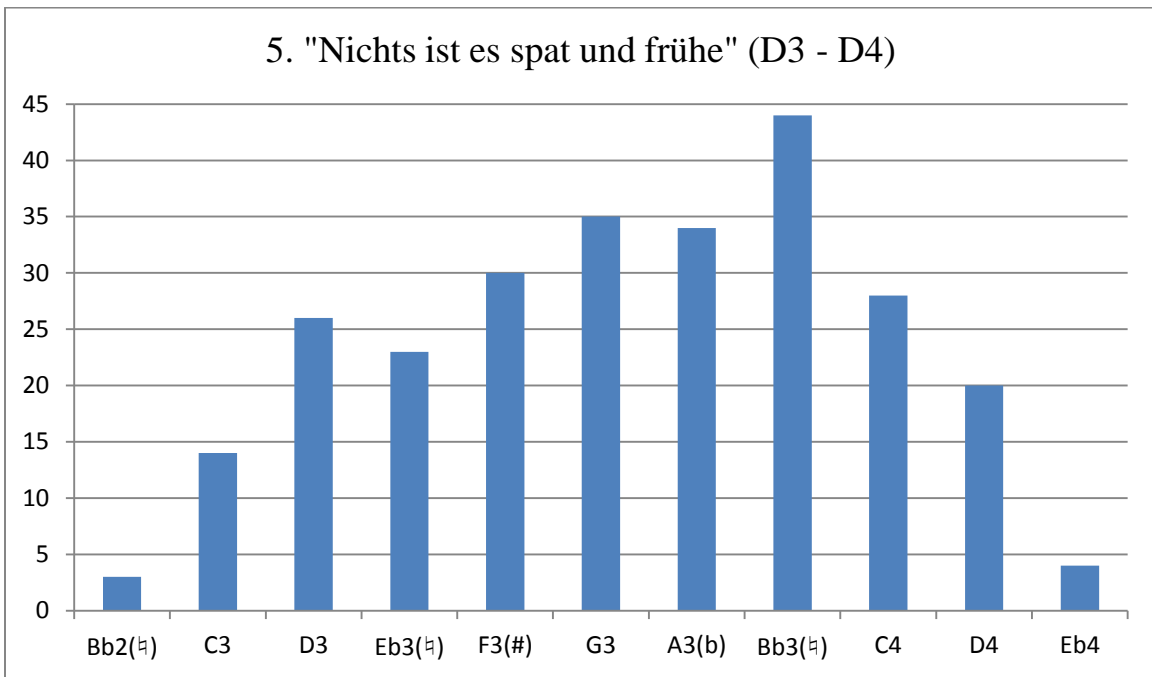


3. "Betrachete, meine Seel" (Eb3 - C4)

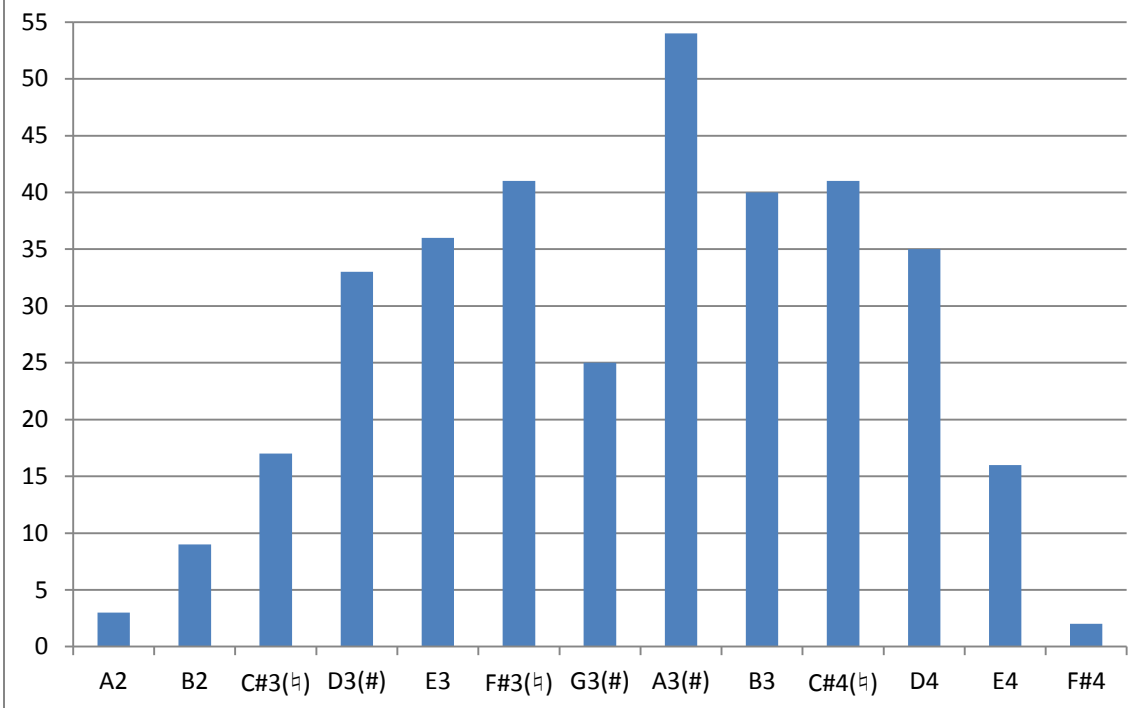


4. "Herr, so du willst" (Eb3 - C4)

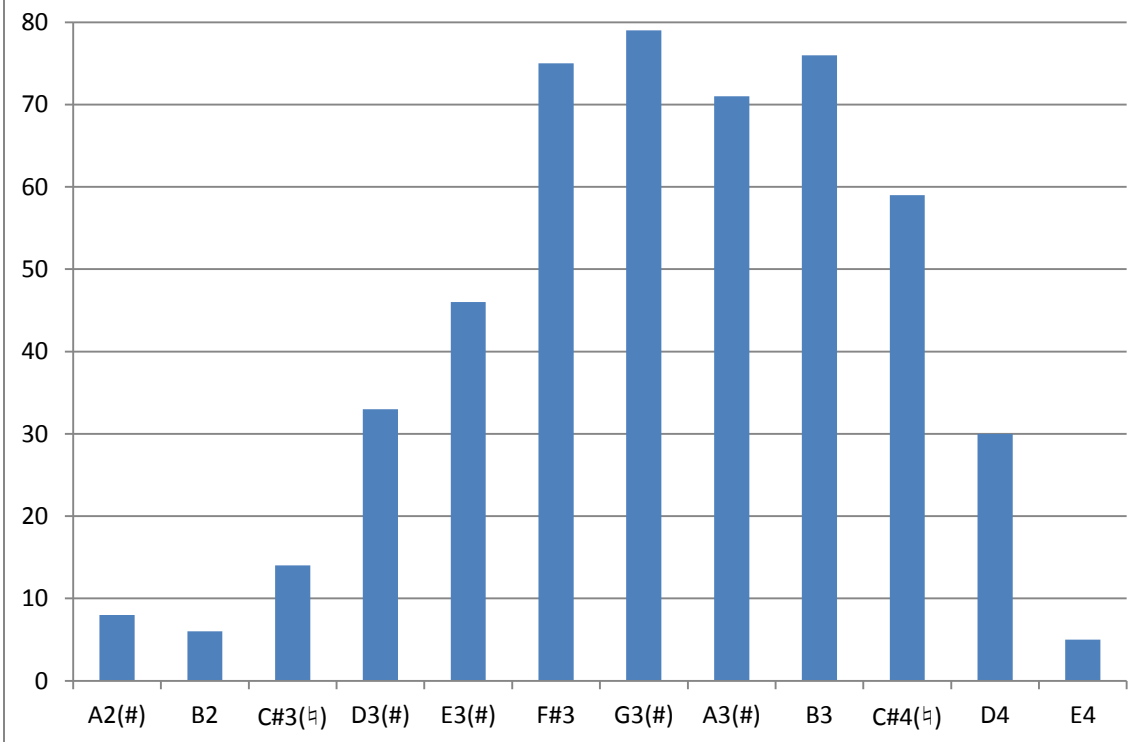




7. "Zurücke, zurücke, geflügelten Winde" (D3 - D4)



8. "Gratias agimus tibi" (D3 - D4)



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