J. S. Bach's Use of the Oboe Instrument Family in his Cantata Works

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Abstract

J.S. Bach used more idiomatic practices for the oboe family in his vocal works. Bach combined his own musical inspirations with the practices used by other composers, giving the oboe a greater variety in its orchestral roles. The aim of this thesis is to evaluate Bach's use of the oboe family in some of his cantatas and vocal works. This thesis provides an overview of the historical context of Bach's works for oboe, a brief biography of the composer, information about the development of the oboe family, and relevant musical analyses featuring the oboe family from selected Bach works. An explanation of how Bach treated different members of the oboe family will be given, as well as a description of how Bach helped to advance the roles of each member of the oboe family.

J. S. Bach's Use and Development of the Oboe Instrument Family

Among the composers of the Baroque period, Johann Sebastian Bach is widely regarded as a genius. His music is often written with contrapuntal technique, employing a wide array of instrumentation and harmony. More frequently than other wind instruments, Bach employed members of the oboe family.[1] The variety of timbres and tone colors available between the oboe, *oboe d'amore*, *oboe da caccia*, and *taille* gave Bach a greater capacity to explore the affections in his music.[2] As the construction of these instruments improved, Bach took greater advantage of their enhanced capabilities in his compositions. Some of Bach's methods in writing for the members of the oboe family remained after his death, while others fell out of practice until their rediscovery.[3]

In addition to Bach's brilliance in composition, he had significant access to resources and information that extended beyond that of his contemporaries. In his development as a composer, he experienced music of both French and German styles, providing him patterns for how his own works were often structured.[4] His musical positions in central Germany gave him access to a wide variety of musical resources.[5] In hopes of better serving his church and faith, he sought excellence in all areas of his music.[6]

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[1] Charles Terry, *Bach's Orchestra* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), 101.

[2] Ibid., 102, 105, 111.

[3] "Bach's Band: The Oboe," *Oxford Bach Soloists*, March 23, 2019, Accessed September 27, 2023, Oxfordbachsoloists.com/2019/03/23/bachs-band-the-oboe/.

[4] Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: the Learned Musician* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 96.

[5] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 3-9.

[6] Wolff. *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 338-39.

This thesis will describe of Bach's methods of musical excellence in relation to the use of the oboe family. Included in this thesis are a brief biography of Bach, composers who influenced his compositions, a brief history of each member of the Baroque oboe family, and analyses of relevant vocal-orchestral works for each member of the Baroque oboe family. A summary and conclusions section compares and evaluates these discussions.

Biography of J. S. Bach

Much of the complexity and maturity in the music of J. S. Bach can be attributed to the wide array of musicians and instruments he worked with throughout his career. His early education in Lüneburg introduced him to the keyboard style of German organist Georg Böhm and the French style of orchestration of Jean-Baptiste Lully.[7] His later engagements helped him to meet German organist and choirmaster Dietrich Buxtehude.[8] His involvement in the Lutheran Church also gave him insights respecting the musical traditions of earlier German composers such as Heinrich Schütz and Martin Luther. [9] Bach was also born into a musical family, supplying him the opportunity to begin learning music at an early age; his own father and brother taught him violin and keyboard.[10] His educational opportunities afterwards further enabled him to grow as a composer.

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[7] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 111.

[8] Ibid., 95.

[9] Marshall, Robert L., and Traute M. Marshall, "LEIPZIG (1723–50)," In *Exploring the World of J. S. Bach: A Traveler's Guide* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 74, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/j.ctt18j8xnc.15.

[10] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 21.

Birth and Childhood in Eisenach

J. S. Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany on March 21, 1685, to parents Johann Ambrosius and Maria Elisabeth Bach. Born into a musical family, Bach began to learn music at an early age. It is believed that his father, Ambrosius Bach, gave J. S. Bach his first lessons in violin playing.[11] Bach excelled in school beyond any of his brothers, until the age of ten when he lost both parents. His mother passed, likely due to illness, just before his tenth birthday, and his father died due to illness approximately 9 months later.

Johann Christoph Bach in Ohrdruf

As a result of his parents' passing, Bach left Eisenach to live with his older brother, Johann Christoph Bach, who served as an organist in Ohrdruf.[12] It is likely that Bach learned many of his early keyboard skills from his brother.[13] From Bach's childhood home in Eisenach, he had access to his father's instruments.[14] Bach was enrolled at the Ohrdruf *Lyceum Illustre Gleichense*, where he excelled and rose to the top of his class. After progressing to the *prima* class in Ohrdruf at age 14, Bach moved to continue his education in Lüneburg. Bach rejected multiple opportunities during this time to serve as a musician in order to complete his schooling, however he did earn a position as a choral scholar at St. Michael's. The stipend from this position funded Bach's schooling in Lüneburg.[15]

[11] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 25.

[12] Ibid., 35.

[13] Ibid., 35.

[14] Ibid., 42-43.

[15] Ibid., 38-43.

Schooling in Lüneburg

Upon his arrival to Lüneburg, Bach found himself in the immediate vicinity of Hamburg,. At St. Michael's Church, Bach was immediately immersed in music under cantor August Braun. At St. Michael's, Bach was given the opportunity to begin refining his talents on the organ and harpsichord. Local organist Georg Böhm took a special interest to this skill, and their acquaintanceship heavily influenced Bach's keyboard compositions.[16] Additionally, Bach's newfound acquaintances in Lüneburg gave him the opportunity to see courtly events, including dances and overtures in the French style, originating with Jean-Baptiste Lully in the court of King Louis XIV.[17] It is uncertain whether Bach got to participate in these orchestral performances, or if, he was merely a member of the audience; however, these performances were by groups made up primarily of Frenchmen.[18] It was in Lüneburg that Bach became acquainted with the instrumental traditions of Lully's orchestra,[19] which likely included French orchestral use of the oboe family.[20]

Time in Weimar and Arnstadt

After his time in Lüneburg, Bach pursued a position in Weimar in the court of Duke Johann Ernst of Saxe-Weimar. After a short time in this position, a new church opening in Arnstadt demanded Bach's experience in organ building and repair. He was treated professionally by the people he met at this church and was invited to perform a dedication recital

[16] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 54-60.

[17] Ibid., 65.

[18] E. Lockspeiser, "French Influences on Bach," *Music and Letters* 16, no. 4 (1935): 313-14, http://www.jstor.org/stable/728728.

[19] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 1.

[20] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 65.

on this organ. After his impressive performance, the church decided to further evaluate his musical capabilities. Comparing him to earlier masters of music such as Böhm and Pachelbel, they decided his virtuosity on the keyboard matched theirs, and his compositions sought excellence matching or even surpassing the maturity and virtuosity of these composers.[21] In Arnstadt, Bach composed his first surviving cantata, *Denn du wirst meine Seele nicht in der Hölle lassen*. His composition of this piece gave him a better understanding of the importance of music in public Lutheran worship, resulting in many more significant compositions of his career. Much of Bach's future career in composition displays Bach's intention to write music for the sake of public worship.[22]

Nearing the conclusion of his time in Arnstadt in 1706, Bach's inspiration to write music for public worship began to draw him away from his current job. The musical community in Arnstadt was active but continued to remain traditional and to lack liveliness. Bach was underwhelmed by the opportunities in Arnstadt to meet other composers, and he believed that he had the potential to take his abilities to somewhere greater.[23] At this time, Bach modeled his playing and composition after those of Buxtehude, Reinken, Bruhns, and several French organists.[24] Evidence also exists pointing to his knowledge of the works of Kuhnau, Corelli, and Legrenzi, as well as others from France, Germany, and Italy.[25] Of particular significance is the influence of Francois Couperin, who largely inspired his harpsichord style and his compositions

[21] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 71-72.

[22] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 2.

[23] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach,* 92-94.

[24] Ibid., 93.

[25] Ibid.

for keyboard.[26] Meeting Buxtehude gave Bach a new perspective on composition.[27] His son, C. P. E. Bach, reported a notable improvement in J. S. Bach's ability to write in counterpoint and fugues from 1703 to 1707, during his time studying the works of Buxtehude.[28]

Further broadening of Bach's inspirations came in December of 1705, when Buxtehude premiered two oratorios. Seeing Buxtehude as a mentor, Bach drew special inspiration from these less familiar vocal styles, and he established the groundwork for the roles of choirs and orchestras in his future cantatas. During this time, however, none of Bach's works were composed using the oboe, likely due to a lack of local musicians who played the oboe well.[29] Later works during Bach's time at Arnstadt indicate his application of this inspiration, but they begin to include the oboe. These compositions include *Gott ist mein König*, a cantata thought to have been composed in 1707.[30]

St. Blasius's Church Mühlhausen

Soon after composing *Gott ist mein König*, Bach heard of an opportunity at St. Blasius's Church in Mühlhausen. He applied for this position and was hastily accepted. *Gott ist mein König* was among the first of Bach's compositions performed in Mühlhausen. In 1707, Bach officially moved to his new position in Mühlhausen. This was a significant improvement in Bach's situation, as Mühlhausen was a major political and historical city at the time. Given the importance of this city, Bach had access to a great number of musical resources, such as

[26] Lockspeiser, "French Influences," 312-13.

[27] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach,* 93-94.

[28] Ibid., 92-94.

[29] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 207-216.

[30] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 96-99.

musicians and instruments, which he employed in his compositions. The oboe family found a more significant place in Bach's music during his time here, as he began to compose more cantatas and orchestral works. *Gott ist mein König* was the first major vocal-instrumental work to bring Bach fame, and he was invited back to perform this cantata at Mühlhausen in 1709 and 1710, despite the fact that he had taken a job at Weimar.[31]

Return to Weimar

Just over a year after taking the job at Mühlhausen, Bach was granted a position with the Court of the Duke of Weimar.[32] After arranging for his replacement in Mühlhausen, he left very soon after for Weimar. Bach enjoyed the many benefits presented to him in his position at Weimar. First, he was in frequent company of the Duke, who had the ability to obtain instruments and resources for Bach. The Duke was known for actively seeking out instruments and for expanding his music library. Second, the pay was significantly greater compared to that of Arnstadt and Mühlhausen. Third, he was in the company of other high-level professional musicians.[33] While Bach had access to more music and higher levels of musicians, he did not have the facilities to coordinate a full orchestra. Weimar cantatas, as a result, have significantly lighter instrumentation with very little emphasis on woodwinds when compared to his later works.[34]

While serving at the Court of the Duke of Weimar, Bach demonstrated his capabilities as a violinist and organist and performed many of his newer, more complex works. Many of his

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[31] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 102-11.

[32] Ibid., 115-16.

[33] Ibid., 119-21.

[34] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 5.

organ works were written during his time at Weimar, likely due to the special and instrumentational limitations on his orchestra and the presence of such a great organ. While serving in Weimar, Bach worked on a myriad of transcriptions of works by other composers. These works include those of Vivaldi, Alessandro and Benedetto Marcello, and Torelli.[35] Bach's work in transcription and ornamentation continued beyond his tenure at Weimar, as an ornamented version of Alessandro Marcello's Oboe Concerto in D Minor, movement 2, exists by J. S. Bach. While Bach transcribed this piece from the original Oboe Concerto with ornamentations for harpsichord, it has inspired more interest in historical performance practice for modern oboists.[36] This transcription became one of the most widely performed oboe concerti in modern times.[37]

During his time at Weimar, Bach frequently wrote for the oboe in his solo cantatas. Of his solo cantatas, many include obbligato and solo oboe parts. Of particular interest is the soprano solo cantata *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*, BWV 199, which features an important oboe obbligato accompanying the soprano soloist. Later, the oboe plays another significant role as an independent voice in the orchestra during a final soprano aria.[38] This advancement was one of the key developments in the role of the oboe throughout the music of Bach. Despite the rarity of

[35] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 126.

[36] Netherlands Bach Society, "Concerto in D Minor," accessed February 6, 2024, https://www.bachvereniging.nl/en/bwv/bwv-974.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*, ed. Carl Adolf Martienssen (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1912).

woodwind inclusion in the Weimar cantatas,[39] Bach still uses the tone color of the oboe in this solo cantata.

In Weimar, Bach's role as a composer was not clearly defined in writing; he was simply designated as a court organist and chamber musician.[40] This lack of clarity allowed room for Bach to put on performances of his own compositions through his time under the Duke of Weimar. Evidence exists to suggest that it was in Weimar that Bach began to write his solo partitas and sonatas for unaccompanied violin.[41] In his time in Weimar, Bach performed the Telemann Concerto for 2 Violins in G Major, TWV 52:G2, a performance in which Telemann himself likely participated. It was at this point that Bach is thought to have met Telemann, and their professional relationship grew later.[42]

During this period, Bach began to gain popularity among other courts, including those of the Saxe-Eisenach with Telemann and Saxe-Weissenfels. It was in collaboration with Duke Christian of Weissenfels that Bach composed his first secular cantata, the *Hunt Cantata*.[43] It was also at Weimar that Bach further developed his skills as an organist, harpsichordist, and organ consultant.[44] It can also be assumed that Bach's involvement in other churches granted him the physical space to work with broader orchestrations and larger orchestras. The presence of wind

[39] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 5.

[40] Ibid., 3.

[41] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 133.

[42] Ibid., 129-34.

[43] Ibid., 134-35.

[44] Ibid., 136-145.

instruments, however minimal, can likely be traced back to his connections to these other courts and churches.

In 1714, Bach requested from the Duke of Weimar the position of Concertmaster. While he refused to give Bach a position ranking equal to or above Vice-Capellmeister Drese, Bach was given this position, with a higher salary than the Vice Capellmeister. This new position demanded that Bach perform new, original music at least once monthly, and he had the authority to summon any employed musicians with this court at his will. As Concertmaster, Bach was given the role of advancing the quality of the orchestra to a much higher level, which was likely neglected by the previous leadership under the Capellmeister and Vice Capellmeister.[45]

Using his new position as Concertmaster, Bach had access to an updated set of resources. First, Bach was able to regularly perform works of his own composition. Second, the renovation of the *Himmelsburg*, or palace church, supplied additional space for a larger orchestra. This renovation saw its conclusion in 1714, at the time of Bach's promotion to Concertmaster.[46] Third, he had greater authority over his musicians and when they would need to be present for rehearsals and performances. This meant that he could demand higher performance standards from his ensembles. Bach's core orchestra included a full chorus, violinists, a bassoonist, trumpeters, and a timpanist. Other primary musicians were invited from the town musicians and lackeys.[47] It is likely that his writing for oboes and other woodwinds was composed for the

[45] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 147-50.

[46] Ibid., 157-59.

[47] Ibid., 158.

community musicians, not those directly hired by the Court.[48] As a result, there was a notably smaller focus on virtuosity in the oboe parts.

Of the *Himmelsburg* cantatas, the music of eighteen of them have survived to today. Of these 18, nine are scored for oboe and one of those nine also includes the *taille*.[49] The virtuosic complexity of many of the oboe parts in these works implies that Bach had access, at this point, to oboists who were capable of performing them well. It is unclear if these oboists were town musicians or employed with churches with whom Bach had professional relationships at the time, as the extant lists of hired musicians with the court only includes the ducal court, without the inclusion of oboists.[50]

During the later years of his time at Weimar, Bach focused more on composing and transcribing concerti. Of great influence was Vivaldi, from whom Bach seemingly developed his own ideas of good concerto composition. Of his compositions in Weimar, it can be seen that the popular, traditional style of Italian music is paired with the complex counterpoint that existed in his earlier compositions.[51]

In 1716, Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen attended Bach's sister's wedding, at which Bach's *Wedding Cantata* was performed. Here, the prince discovered Bach's talent as a musician, composer, and concertmaster. In 1717, the position of Capellmeister opened in Cöthen, and the prince immediately invited Bach to employment in Cöthen, which he accepted.[52]

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[48] Wolff., *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 158.

[49] Ibid., 162-63.

[50] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 3-4.

[51] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 174.

[52] Ibid., 177-85.

Capellmeister in Cöthen

Before settling in Cöthen, Bach spent time in Leipzig to examine a new organ at St. Paul's Church. While here, he met Johann Kuhnau, the cantor at St. Thomas's Church. While in Leipzig, Bach noticed more cultural opportunity that was not present at his arrival to Cöthen. Cöthen was a much more agricultural town with a much smaller Lutheran population. Especially notable of Cöthen was the lack of musical culture. Despite these limitations, the wealthy Prince Leopold was highly supportive of Bach's musical endeavors, and the musicians he hired were those of Berlin's highest quality. Upon his arrival in 1717, there was already a significant number of musicians hired at Cöthen, including multiple woodwinds.[53] The variety of instrumentation and the level of musicianship far exceeded Bach's musicians at Weimar. Of particular interest was the presence of multiple woodwinds, including skilled oboist Johann Ludwig Rose.[54]

A major difference in function of the orchestra at Cöthen and that of Weimar is that Cöthen did not have a focus on Lutheran worship. While worship music was not entirely absent, it was not given an equal importance as instrumental and secular music. There was not a full choir present in this court,[55] and many of the cantatas he composed there were secular in nature. Given these resources, Bach was given the opportunity to divert more of his focus towards independent instrumental music. A primary accomplishment of Bach's time in Cöthen was his mastery of instrumental colors and timbres in the orchestral setting, indicated by advanced works

[53] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 187-94.

[54] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 6.

[55] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 195.

such as his solo concerti and the Brandenburg Concertos.[56] Additionally, multiple overtures by Bach gave further individual significance to the oboe.[57]

Despite Bach's complete lack of sacred cantata output during his time at Cöthen, he maintained his goal of advancing music for the sake of improving worship. Of all of the major vocal works composed at Cöthen, only one was sacred; however, his continuous pursuit of musical maturity and the development of his orchestra were done with the intent of moving to a position that included worship duties.[58] His later appointment to Leipzig fulfilled this goal, but he made multiple steps towards this position throughout his time in Cöthen.

During his time at Cöthen, Bach travelled more than at any other period of his life. These travels included trips taken representing himself as an organist, consultant, and composer as well as representing Prince Leopold's court. During these travels, Bach made good professional relationships with churches around Germany, especially in Hamburg. During these travels, he was able to hire musicians such as Anna Magdalena Wilcke for the court at Cöthen. With the presence of these musicians, Bach was able to develop his style to better serve the churches in Leipzig later in his life.[59]

Word came in 1722 that John Kuhnau, cantor at St. Thomas's Church in Leipzig, had passed away. Bach very hastily applied for the position, but Telemann was offered the spot first as a popular composer in Leipzig, and as someone who had contributed greatly to their musical community. In response, Telemann's employers in Hamburg increased his pay to keep him there.

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[56] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 6-7.

[57] Ibid., 7.

[58] Ibid., 7.

[59] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 207-219.

Another familiar figure to Leipzig, Christoph Graupner, was offered the position second, leaving Bach as the third choice. Graupner was preferred because of his education under the two former cantors of St. Thomas Church at Leipzig and his education in Law at Leipzig University. Despite Graupner's successful audition, his employers refused his dismissal, and he was forced to decline the position in Leipzig.[60] At this point, Bach was officially given the role of Cantor at St. Thomas's Church.

Among the audition materials that Bach presented were cantatas *Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe*, BWV 22, and *Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn*, BWV 23.[61] In both of these cantatas, the oboe is featured as a solo or obbligato instrument. The opening aria of BWV 22 features a solo oboe part, later accompanying the vocalists. The next aria also features an oboe obbligato, with the final movement of this cantata using the oboe in unison with the violins,[62] which was a more common practice in his earlier cantatas. In BWV 23, the oboe parts are featured as an *oboe d'amore* duet instead rather than as ordinary oboes. In the opening aria, this duet accompanies a vocal soprano and alto duet. The second movement of this cantata uses the *oboe d'amore* part in unison with the first violins to provide variety in timbre. The *coro* in the third movement uses the *oboe d'amore* parts primarily in unison with the first violins, occasionally breaking into two- and three-part counterpoint with the violins.[63] These two cantatas demonstrate a great deal of

[60] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 219-23.

[61] Ibid., 222.

[62] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe*, ed. Wilhelm Rust (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1855).

[63] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn*, ed. Christoph Wolff (Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1992).

versatility that Bach employed in the oboe's orchestral role at this point, and the model of BWV 22 persisted into the formal elements of Bach's first cantatas in Leipzig.[64]

Cantor at St. Thomas's Church in Leipzig

The majority of Bach's most famous and mature works were completed while he was cantor of St. Thomas's Church in Leipzig. The conditions of his arrival indicated he was already well-respected and widely known. In addition to serving St. Thomas's Church, he was also required to serve as music director of the four city churches and teach at the St. Thomas School. Among the greatest benefits to Bach in his new role were the position of Leipzig on two major trading routes and the presence of Leipzig University, at which a major debate between Martin Luther and other theologians fueled the Protestant Reformation.[65] The economic and religious attributes of Leipzig attracted much musical traffic, providing Bach with exceptional resources compared to other primary trade cities in Germany.[66]

While in Leipzig, Bach had a choir typically consisting of 17-20 people with varying numbers of instrumentalists in the orchestra. He maintained a strong instrumental group in order to supplement the lacking numbers in his choir.[67] Frequently, the instrumental parts would strengthen the weaker sections of the chorus.[68] Included in his woodwind section were consistently between two and four oboes, for which he frequently wrote parts in his instrumental works and cantatas. Unlike at previous settings, Bach had the rehearsal and performance space to

[64] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 222.

[65] Ibid., 238.

[66] Ibid., 238.

[67] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 9.

[68] Ibid., 9.

include this variety in instrumentation.[69] It is also likely that Bach had access to an array of well-crafted instruments through the inventories of St. Thomas's and St. Nicholas's Churches, and these instruments were used in both churches.[70] The musicians and instruments available through Bach's position provided a firm foundation for the maturity and variety of the compositions Bach created throughout his time at Leipzig.[71] Wolff notes that the complexity of his writing in Leipzig demands the best musicians from the localities and from the St. Thomas School.[72]

At this time, Bach also had a core group of 8 instrumental musicians, including 4 *Stadtpfeiffers*, three art fiddlers, and one associate. These included two oboists, two trumpeters, two violinists, a bassoonist, and another individual whose specific instrument is not known. The high-level performance abilities of these core musicians provided the groundwork for exceptional complexity in his music. Despite this, the difficulty and the immense quantity of music Bach composed demanded more from his musicians than had previously been expected. This was balanced, to some degree, as Bach kept in mind the demands he was bringing to his musicians as he composed his cantatas.[73]

As a result of the instrumental resources Bach had available to him at Leipzig, there were key improvements made possible in the new cantatas. Often, he would program cantatas from Weimar and Cöthen with additions to the instrumentation or changes made possible with his position as cantor. For example, BWV 18 shows an addition of two recorders to the original

[69] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 12.

[70] Ibid., 19.

[71] Ibid., 9-19.

[72] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 251.

[73] Ibid., 261-64.

orchestration. Additionally, Bach began incorporating low-register oboes that were previously unavailable, especially the *oboe d'amore* and *oboe da caccia*. Technical demands are heightened for his instrumental musicians as these resources become present.[74]

Throughout his time at Leipzig, Bach continued to use his resources to innovate and implement more musical ideas into his works. He also sought to contribute to the realm of music theory in a practical sense, writing the *Art of Fugue* and the *Well-Tempered Klavier*, explaining concepts of counterpoint and music theory in a way that applies to his students' educations.[75] He also developed the *Clavier-Übung* collection, a group of four publications on keyboard methods and practice.[76] In the 1730s, Bach stated in his "Standard Ensemble for Well-Appointed Church Music" the numbers for an ideal church orchestra, containing 2-3 oboists.[77] This number was the only one that matched the violin section in standard quantity, demonstrating Bach's opinion on the importance of the oboe family in tone color or dynamic balance.

In the early 1740s, Bach decided to take a step back from the prolific composing and constant work he was doing. He left the *Collegium Musicum*, resulting in a decreased incentive to produce music as frequently as he did before his departure from the *Collegium*. As a result, the 1740s featured a significant reduction in his musical output. The same reduction applied to his public performances of solo and chamber music and vocal compositions outside of Leipzig. Some of the large projects towards the end of his life were further cut short due to developing

[74] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 273-74.

[75] Ibid., 308.

[76] Ibid., 374.

[77] Ibid., 347.

health problems in his eyes.[78] After getting two surgeries to deal with these issues, he passed on July 28, 1750, due to a stroke.[79]

Legacy

Performance of Bach's music largely fell out of favor soon after his death. While his works, especially for harpsichord and organ, persisted as educational resources, there was a significant decline in in frequency of public performances of his works until the early 1800s. Throughout the classical period, Bach's works influenced the compositions of many major composers, including Haydn and Mozart, and this trend continued into the Romantic Period with composers such as Mendelssohn and Schumann.[80] In 1845, Mendelssohn had a collection of Bach's organ preludes published, and in 1850 he did the same with the Brandenburg Concertos. Mendelssohn's revival of the *Mass in B Minor* between 1833 and 1845 paved the way for Bach's vocal works and cantatas to arise once again, and our modern performances of the cantatas are attributed to Mendelssohn's reviving interest in the Bach repertoire.[81]

Historical Context

To understand the conditions in which Bach worked to improve the oboe family's role in music, it is important to understand the historical context in which Bach was operating; in addition to Bach's family and faith inspiring him and instrumental music gaining significance in recent history, other factors contributed to the context of Bach's works. Below are discussions of

[78] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 418-31.

[79] Ibid., 449-51.

[80] Friedrich Blume and Piero Weiss, "Bach in the Romantic Era," *The Musical Quarterly* 50, no.3 (1964): 290, http://www.jstor.org/stable/741017.

[81] Blume and Weiss, "Bach in the Romantic Era," 294.

relevant aspects of the musical time period, including the history of the oboe family and the importance of these instruments in the expression of the Affections.

The Oboe Family Before Bach's Time

The baroque oboe is a direct descendant of the shawm, which was the instrument frequently used throughout the late renaissance and early baroque period. In the court of King Louis XIV of France was Jean-Baptiste Lully, whose musicians, specifically the Hotteterre family, pioneered significant improvements in many of the woodwind instruments of the time. A series of improvements came in the 1660s.[82] Among these improvements was the change from the harsh, unbalanced tone of the shawm to the more refined tone of the oboe, which could more easily blend with the rest of the orchestra.[83] For similar reasons, there have been significant misinterpretations of the sound of the early baroque oboe, describing it as harsh and unpleasant.[84] The tone was significantly improved from that of the shawm despite the covered sound of some chromatic notes.[85] While the term '*hautbois*' was used to describe both the shawm and the oboe, the improvements made with the introduction of the baroque oboe resulted in a consistent use of them in the court of Louis XIV, and the shawm fell out of use. The first piece to use the oboe

[82] Arthur H. Benade, "Woodwinds: The Evolutionary Path Since 1700," *The Galpin Society Journal* 47 (1994): 74, https://doi.org/10.2307/842663.

[83] Benade, "Woodwinds: The Evolutionary Path," 74.

[84] Josef Marx, "The Tone of the Baroque Oboe: An Interpretation of the History of Double-Reed Instruments," *The Galpin Society Journal* 4 (1951): 3, https://doi.org/10.2307/841256.

[85] "Bach's Band," *Oxford Bach Soloists*.

was Lully's *Ballet de l'Amour Malade*, and the success of the instruments inspired their consistent use thereafter.[86]

In addition to the shawm predating the oboe, there were also precursors to the *oboe da caccia* and *taille* in Lully's orchestra. It is likely that the *taille,* or tenor oboe, was developed in the 1660s, at approximately the same time as the oboe. The *taille* appears later in the works of Bach, but there was also the development from this family of the *oboe da caccia,* a curved version of the tenor oboe.[87] Of additional importance is evidence that suggests a possible precursor to the *oboe d'amore* in the French court, which would have played the *haute-contre* part; this, however, has not been entirely proven.[88]

Throughout the baroque period after the 1660s, the oboe gained international popularity, spreading from the court of Louis XIV to Italy, Germany, and England. Typical use of the instrument was as a *ripieno* instrument, not a solo or obbligato instrument, as it did not yet have a role beyond supporting the other voices.[89] Bach was among the first major composers to treat the oboe with the respect of a solo instrument; this treatment can be observed in his cantatas, especially when he arrived to Mühlhausen and began incorporating the oboe into his compositions regularly.[90]

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[86] Rebecca Harris-Warrick, "A Few Thoughts on Lully's Hautbois," *Early Music* 18, no. 1 (1990): 98, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3127855.

[87] Reine Dahlqvist, "Taille, Oboe Da Caccia, and Corno Inglese," *The Galpin Society Journal* 26 (1973): 59, https://doi.org/10.2307/841114.

[88] Harris-Warrick, "A Few Thoughts on Lully's Hautbois," 102.

[89] John William Denton, "The Use of Oboes in the Church Cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach," University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music, 1977, in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/use-oboes-church-cantatas-johann-sebastian-bach/docview/302873454/se-2.

[90] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 207-216.

The Doctrine of the Affections

Throughout the Baroque Period, composers sought to demonstrate the affections through their music. The affections are emotional reactions to music, based on Aristotle's descriptions of the state of the soul. Composers of the time used music to stimulate the soul into experiencing the affections, according to the perspective of Descartes.[91] In instrumental music, Baroque composers tried to portray the affections generically, aiming to give the entire audience a similar emotional experience. Composers of vocal music, on the other hand, generally used music to paint the affections expressed by the text. Monteverdi led a movement, known as the *seconda pratica,* which advocated breaking rules of harmony and counterpoint in order to better express the affections of the text in his vocal music.[92]

Bach's Symbolic Language in the Affections

Throughout Bach's compositions, the affections are visible through symbols he uses in pitch, rhythm, contour, and timbre. In multiple occasions, Bach used motives to demonstrate certain emotions, such as slow chromatic scales showing grief and certain rhythms to show joy or rage. These symbols are not entirely consistent at times, however; certain motives of joy are identical in rhythm to those of rage, but the context in which symbols are used determines their implied meaning.[93] This can be seen in the instrumentation Bach selected, as well.

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[91] Arthur W. Locke, "Descartes and Seventeenth-Century Music," *The Musical Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1935): 426-327, http://www.jstor.org/stable/738661.

[92] J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music, 10th Edition*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2019, 286-287.

[93] Walter Emery, "Bach's Symbolic Language," *Music and Letters* 30, no. 4 (1949): 345-51, http://www.jstor.org/stable/730676.

The Oboe in Bach's Affections

The members of the oboe family were often closely related to the symbols Bach used. While they were not prescribed certain musical symbols as gestures, they were often used to express emotion in conjunction with certain affections, depending on contexts. The oboe, as both a solo instrument and in duets, was primarily used in Bach's music to show death, pain, sorrow, and joy. The emotion expressed was heavily reliant on the surrounding musical context. It is evident by Bach's diverse writing for the oboe that he saw the instrument as versatile in which emotions it could express.[94] It can also be seen in his music that the *oboe d'amore*, *oboe da caccia*, and *taille* proved to be useful in depicting the affections; however, this is not as much so as with the oboe.

Instruments, Musical Examples, and Analysis

While most of Bach's works for the oboe family use the baroque oboe specifically, he also implements the *oboe d'amore*, *oboe da caccia*, and *taille*. The following discussions use musical examples of early and late cantatas and other major vocal-instrumental works to describe how Bach contributed to the roles of each instrument as his resources and abilities became more technically advanced. The final discussion of this section describes the roles each instrument plays in the affections in Bach's music.

The Oboe: Fingerings

Much ambiguity exists regarding the specific fingering charts and methods employed to create certain notes in the Baroque oboe repertoire. It is most likely the chart of Johann Phillip Eisel, originating in Erfurt, Germany in 1738, that informed the technique required of oboists in

[94] Denton, "The Use of Oboes," 1977.

Bach's early works.[95] Minor updates in the keywork possibly reduced the limitations of what Bach's oboes could do, but these improvements were not confirmed.[96] Considering these updates, as well as his increased access to high-quality musicians and his own development as a composer, Bach had more opportunity for complexity for the oboe in his later compositions.

It is also worth noting that Bach wrote for three versions of the Baroque oboe. First, there was a Baroque oboe in C, called the 'ordinary oboe'. There were also transposing oboes in Bb and A.[97] The *oboe d'amore* always transposed in A, and the *oboe da caccia* and *taille* were both non-transposing and pitched a fifth lower, in F.[98]

Oboe in the Late Baroque

The specific oboe used in Bach's music is that which premiered Robert Cambert's *Pomone*, premiering in performance in 1671.[99] This oboe was an improvement from its predecessors, but still had a few major flaws. First, the G# did not have a designated key, and was created in some models by covering one of the two adjacent tone holes with the third finger. Second, the A# was obtained through a forked fingering that did not result in balanced tone or pitch with the surrounding notes. These two notes were also more out of tune than what was accepted at the time. In response to these issues, Gerhard Hoffman developed a new model of the instrument in 1727 with keys for both G# and A# that resulted in better tone and pitch relative to the surrounding notes. It was unclear if Bach's oboists used this model of the oboe or not, as it

[95] Bruce Haynes, "Oboe Fingering Charts, 1695-1816," *The Galpin Society Journal* 31 (1978): 68-93, https://doi.org/10.2307/841191.

[96] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 95-96.

[97] Ibid., 96.

[98] Ibid., 103-04.

[99] Ibid., 95.

was not approved or commonplace by makers until after 1750.[100] It is clear, however, that Bach was focused on the best possible performance quality from his oboists, as he avoided problematic notes on the instruments he had available when they would cause noticeable musical problems.[101]

Bach's Oboe

As the problems surrounding the A# and G# were solved, there was a significant incline in Bach's use of the potentially problematic Ab/G# fingerings. Only two cantatas including the oboe were composed in keys of three flats prior to his position in Leipzig, whereas seven cantatas in these keys were composed at Leipzig. Similar trends are present in keys of three or more sharps; of the eight cantatas with oboe composed in these keys, only two were composed before Bach's time in Leipzig.[102] Table 1 demonstrates these statistics with additional information, drawing from his sacred and secular cantatas, fragments, passions, and oratorios. It is possible, from the evidence in this table, that Bach learned of the oboe's problems in these keys, which is why they were statistically less popular in Leipzig. See Appendix A for more information on oboe instrumentation in Bach's vocal works.

Table 1 Extant Cantatas and Vocal Works in keys of 3 or more sharps or flats.

	Works with Oboe	In keys with 3 flats	In keys with 3-4 Sharps
Pre-Leipzig	20	2	2
At Leipzig	205	7	6

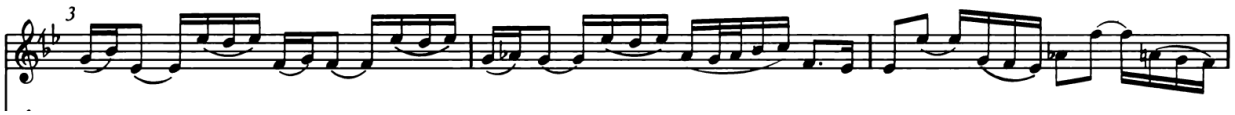
[100] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 95-96.

[101] Ibid., 95.

[102] Ibid., 209-214.

Bach's works composed before Leipzig in 3-flat keys include BWV 199 and 47, and those in 3- and 4-sharp keys include BWV 132 and 185. In BWV 199, composed in 1714 in Cöthen,[103] the oboe is only used in two movements, of which only the slower of the two movements is actually written in c minor.[104] It is also true for BWV 47, composed in 1720,[105] that only one movement includes oboe and is in c minor, and this is of further interest in that the second oboe remains tacet for this movement.[106] These trends indicate that Bach may have been hesitant to use oboes in these keys and did so only rarely in the case of even his best oboists. The adagio passage in Figure 1 shows Bach's simpler writing in c minor before his time in Leipzig.

Figure 1



Excerpt from BWV 199, *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut,* Section 2: Aria. Adagio.[107]

Similar trends exist in BWV 132 and 185, using 3-4 sharps in their key signatures for oboe. BWV 132, composed in 1715,[108] demonstrates exceptional technical virtuosity in the solo oboe part, but only in the first aria. Otherwise, the oboe plays simpler parts in unison with the

[103] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 214.

[104] Bach, *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*.

[105] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 209.

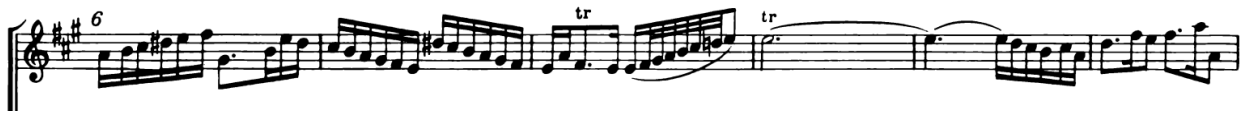
[106] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Wer sich selbst erhöhet, der soll erniedriget warden*, ed. Helmuth Osthoff, Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1982.

[107] Bach, *Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut*.

[108] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 212.

strings.[109] BWV 185, also composed in 1715,[110] is notable for its overall lack of difficulty in parts played in three sharps. The movement with the most technical difficulty is written for oboe in A, removing the challenges associated with playing in keys of three sharps. Further evidence, specifically that movement 1 can be played on trumpet *or* oboe,[111] likely indicates that Bach did not have the confidence in his available oboists at the time to perform well in challenging keys. Figure 2 shows a sample of the technical writing in BWV 132, which tends to remain primarily scalar.

Figure 2



Excerpt from BWV 132, *Bereitet die Wege, bereitet die Bahn*, Section 1 Aria.[112]

Bach's writing for oboe in the early cantatas was notably less developed than that of his Leipzig cantatas. Of the earliest examples is BWV 131, *Aus der Tiefe rufe ich*, composed in 1707-1708.[113] In the opening choral section, the oboe tends not to develop into long passages of interest like in late compositions by Bach. In the third movement of this cantata, the oboe is used

[109] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Bereitet die Wege, bereitet die Bahn*, ed. Alfred Dürr, Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1954.

[110] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 213.

[111] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Barmherziges Herze der ewigen Liebe*, ed. Yoshitake Kobayashi, Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1993.

[112] Bach, *Bereitet die Wege, bereitet die Bahn*.

[113] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 212.

frequently to outline triads and embellish the parts of the solo vocalists.[114] Later cantatas demonstrate much greater maturity in his counterpoint and demands on the oboe.

Many of his later works in Leipzig feature a substantial improvement in his writing for both solo oboe and oboe in counterpoint. Among these examples is *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, BWV 12, composed in 1724-1725,[115] which uses the oboe both as an opening sinfonia solo and as an obbligato to an alto aria. In the first movement, the oboe serves as a soloist with string accompaniment, performing a continuous string of melodic ideas that consistently unfold into the next part of the melody. The difficulty of this movement demonstrates the demand for high quality that Bach could confidently ask of his oboists by the time he got to Leipzig. The fourth movement further evidences this conclusion, as the oboist has a distinctly difficult obbligato part written in c minor. In BWV 131, a much earlier cantata, Bach was not writing as advanced counterpoint to the vocal parts in oboe obbligatos, whereas BWV 12, composed much later, features both improvements to the oboe's mature counterpoint to the vocalist, but there is also an opening solo to set the stage for the vocalist. The solo, as well as the counterpoint, frequently unfold in overlapping phrases from one cadence directly into the next melody.[116] Figure 3 shows an example of the more complex obbligato style featured in Leipzig, as Bach wrote in BWV 12.

[114] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Aus der Tiefen rufe ich*, ed. Ryuichi Higuchi, Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1986.

[115] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 207.

[116] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, ed. Reinmar Emans, Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1989.

Figure 3

Excerpt from BWV 12, *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, Section 4 Aria.[117]

Another interesting element of BWV 12 is that both the oboe solo in the sinfonia and the oboe obbligato in the Alto aria are written in the key of C minor, which has previously been discussed as particularly challenging.[118] This indicates one of two things: the oboist could perform the piece using an oboe in Bb, or that Bach had enough confidence to rely on consistent accuracy on the notoriously difficult Db. As demonstrated by the fingerings of the oboe soloist in the J. S. Bach foundation, it is not out of the question to perform these movements on the oboe in Bb. These challenges indicate the advanced nature with which Bach expected his Leipzig oboists to perform.[119]

The *Oboe D'Amore*

The baroque *oboe d'amore* is a very similar instrument to the standard baroque oboe, but it is pitched in A, a minor third below the oboe, and comes down to a bulb-shaped bell. Among the key features of the *oboe d'amore* is the tone it gets from this unique bell shape, which is where the term '*d'amore,*' or 'of love' originates.[120] The exact year that the first *oboe d'amore* was created is uncertain, however there are extant compositions that date back to 1717 in a

[117] Bach, *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen.*

[118] Ibid.

[119] J.S. Bach Foundation, "J.S. Bach – Cantata BWV 12 'Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen' (J.S. Bach Foundation)," https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xG8DkFA3QyE.

[120] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 107-08.

cantata by Kuhnau. By 1723, the instrument had become commonplace in Leipzig, where Bach used it regularly upon his arrival to St. Thomas's Church.[121]

Oboe D'Amore in Bach's Music

Bach employed the *oboe d'amore* frequently throughout his time in Leipzig. Starting with the *St. John Passion*, the *oboe d'amore* became commonplace throughout the vocal music repertoire of Bach, sometimes even replacing the ordinary oboe completely.[122] Among the chief ways in which Bach uses the *oboe d'amore* is to express more reserved sorts of affections. BWV 248, BWV 94, and the *Magnificat* are good indicators of the affections associated with the *oboe d'amore*: the descriptors in these pieces' respective arias include darkness, blindness, and lowliness.[123] Other cantatas use the covered timbre of the instrument to associate it with the tenderness of love.

The *Magnificat* contains perhaps one of the most famous arias including the *oboe d'amore*. Section 3, "*Quia respexit*," uses an *oboe d'amore* as obbligato with a soprano soloist.[124] The text translates to "because He has regarded the lowly state of His slavegirl; for look! From now on they will say that I am blessed."[125] Bach uses the *oboe d'amore* quite intentionally to express the intimate emotions the singer is experiencing with her Lord, both in the negative painting of her lowliness in sin and in the heights of her blessed state as a child of

[121] Dahlqvist, "Taille, Oboe Da Caccia, and Corno Inglese," 67.

[122] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 110.

[123] Ibid., 111.

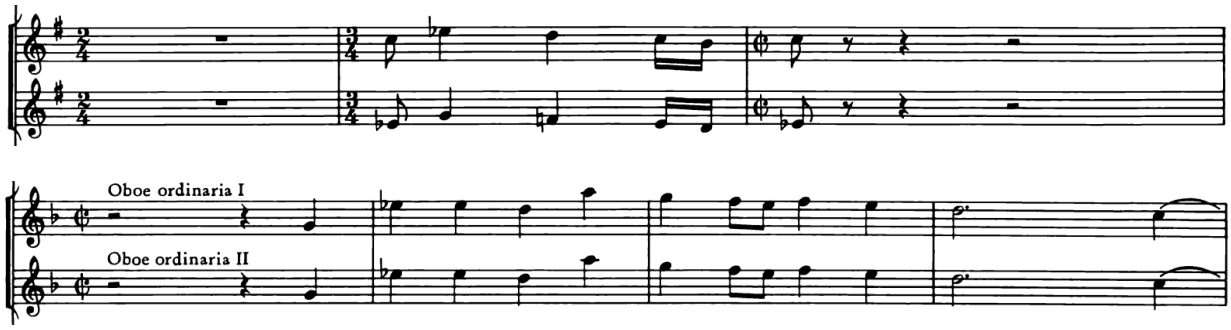
[124] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Magnificat in D Major*, ed. Alfred Duerr, Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1955.

[125] Bach Cantatas Website, "Magnificat in D major BWV 243: English Translation in Interlinear Format," Accessed February 18, 2024, https://www.bach-cantatas.com/Texts/BWV243-Eng3.htm.

God. It is of importance that this is one of the many ways that Bach uses the *oboe d'amore* to express his faith.

Of particular importance in Bach's use of the *oboe d'amore* is BWV 95, *Christus, der ist mein Leben*.[126] In the first section of this cantata, Bach uses 2 *oboes d'amore* to express the thoughts of sadness, death, and grief in the chorus and tenor recitative, but then has the oboists move to ordinary oboes for the allegro section. At this point, the text describes peace and joy, and the brighter timbre of the ordinary oboe is employed.[127] Through this abnormal and sudden change in instrumentation, it is evident that Bach intended the *oboe d'amore* to express a more intimate and introspective affection, whereas the ordinary oboe is brighter and more celebratory. Figure 4 shows the change from the ordinary oboe to the *oboe d'amore.*

Figure 4



Excerpt from BWV 95, *Christus, der ist mein Leben*. Section 1 *Coro*.[128]

[126] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Christus, der ist mein Leben*, ed. Helmuth Osthoff, Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1982.

[127] Denton, "The Use of Oboes," 174.

[128] Bach, *Christus, der ist mein Leben*.

The *Taille*

The *taille* is the straight version of the tenor oboe in the Late Baroque period. It is likely that the instrument came into being at about the same time as the oboe in the early 1660s, based on the low shawms in the court of Lully. It is not certain the exact form the *taille* took relative to the *oboe da caccia* (both of which are pitched in F), but James Talbot in 1700 indicated that it was the same shape as the oboe and proportionally bigger.[129]

A Brief Comment on Bach's Taille

There is no evidence to suggest that Bach ever had notably proficient players of the *taille* parts. Every time the *taille* is used, it is a third oboe part being used to compliment the 1st and 2nd oboe and the low strings. The solo, obbligato, and other key parts were all given to the other oboists in the section. It is also worth noting that BWV 101 features both the *oboe da caccia* and *taille,* but all *oboe da caccia* solos are given to the oboists, not the person playing *taille*. This evidence suggests that the musicians playing *taille* parts were not musically advanced to the ability of performing solos like the first and second oboists.[130] It is also possible that Bach wanted the *taille* to compliment the tone of the lower voices by writing in unison with the tenor voices or supporting the brighter tones of the higher-pitched oboe parts.[131]

The *Oboe da Caccia*

The *oboe da caccia* is another form of the tenor oboe, pitched in F like the *taille*. The primary difference in structure is that, instead of straight like the *taille*, the instrument is curved

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[129] Dahlqvist, "Taille, Oboe Da Caccia, and Corno Inglese," 58.

[130] Denton, "The Use of Oboes," 151-52.

[131] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott*, ed. Robert Lewis Marshall, Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1985.

and then bound in leather. The fingering system is very similar to those of the oboe, *oboe d'amore*, and *taille*, with a compass comparable to the oboe but a fifth lower. The instrument bears a similar tone to that of the oboe and *oboe d'amore*, but the curved structure makes it more difficult to smooth out the bore of the instrument, resulting in a notably more rough and metallic sound. The wider flare of the bell is also conducive to a more brass-like resonance.[132]

The *oboe da caccia* was not developed until the Late Baroque period. Scholars believe it first appeared around 1720. There exists today a model of this instrument made in Leipzig in 1724, indicating that Bach had access to it at or before 1724.[133] This is further evidenced in that the first recorded performance in which Bach implemented the *oboe da caccia* was the St. John Passion in March of 1723.[134]

Bach's Use of the Oboe da Caccia

Bach was among the most prolific composers of the time for the *oboe da caccia*; this is true for the other members of the oboe family, but it is especially true for the *oboe da caccia*. Among the most famous and most emotional uses of the *oboe da caccia* in Bach music is its selective presence in the *St. Matthew Passion*, where it only sounds during the moments of the highest feelings of sorrow, grief, and pain. Bach uses the *oboe da caccia* for the first time in this piece in the 25th section to express the agony in Gethsemane, then is reserved again until section 57 as Jesus is convicted in the court of Pilate. Bach continues to use the *oboe da caccia* in the

[132] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 103-104.

[133] Dahlqvist, "Taille, Oboe Da Caccia, and Corno Inglese," 58-59.

[134] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 104.

most mournful or sorrowful moments of the *St. Matthew Passion*, using the instrument itself as a symbol of sorrow and grief.[135]

In addition to the affections of grief, pain, and sorrow that the *oboe da caccia* can achieve, Bach also uses the same instrument in other contexts to express wonder and adoration, such as in the *Christmas Oratorio*, Part 2. In this oratorio, the *oboe da caccia* accompanies the alto soloist as she sings in adoration of the newborn Jesus.[136] It is also notable that the obbligato *oboe da caccia* is used in *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, BWV 1 (c. 1740)[137], to express the adoration the soprano soloist demonstrates as she sings of the glory of God and Heaven.[138]

Significance of the Various Instruments

In Bach's early years as a composer, he was limited by the variety of oboes he had available to him. Before Leipzig, he was able to consistently write for the ordinary oboe and generally able to write for the *taille*, assuming he had the instrument and someone to play it available at the time. Upon his arrival to St. Thomas's Church in Leipzig, Bach suddenly had many more opportunities to write for the full oboe family as the *oboe d'amore* and *oboe da caccia* became available. He also had less limitations on the number of oboes he could write into his music, as the people available in and near Leipzig were of higher consistency and musical quality than at Arnstadt, Mühlhausen, Weimar, or Cöthen, and there were less limitations due to physical space. The resources available at Leipzig gave Bach exceptional benefits in his

[135] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 105.

[136] Ibid., 105.

[137] Ibid., 216.

[138] Johann Sebastian Bach, *Wie Schön Leuchtet der Morgenstern*, ed. Matthias Wendt, Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1995.

composition through these resources. The variety accessible to Bach also helped expand the role of the oboe immensely in the Late Baroque era.

Summary and Conclusions

Bach is widely known for the quality of his compositions in many ways. His talent for counterpoint is expressed maturely and diversely throughout his career, including his works for orchestras, instrumental and vocal soloists, choirs, organ, and harpsichord. Among the particular elements that makes Bach's orchestral sound greater than that of his contemporaries is his use of different types of instruments so masterfully, including the use of the different members of the oboe family. He composed more for the *oboe d'amore* and *oboe da caccia* than most other composers of the time, and he put a great deal of consideration into how to write for these parts in idiomatic ways, all the while developing their roles in the affections. To this day, Bach maintains a superior legacy as a late Baroque composer, and his compositions remain a staple in the repertoire of modern oboists.

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Appendix A

Oboe Family Instrumentation in J. S. Bach's Cantatas and Vocal Works

This table is an edited compilation of tables in Charles Terry's *Bach's Orchestra*, correcting errors in instrumentation and clarifying parts of the book. Information was verified through the *Neue-Bach Ausgabe* scores. When scores were not available from the *Neue-Bach Ausgabe*, information was used from the *Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe*.

BWV	Oboe	*d'Amore*	*Da Caccia*	*Taille*
1	-	-	2	-
2	2	-	-	-
3	-	2	-	-
4	-	-	-	-
5	2	-	-	-
6	2	-	1	-
7	-	2	-	-
8	-	2	-	-
9	-	1	-	-
10	2	-	-	-
11	2	-	-	-
12	1	-	-	-
13	-	-	1	-
14	2	-	-	-
15	-	-	-	-
16	2	-	1	-
17	2	-	-	-
18	-	-	-	-

19	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	1
20	3	-	-	-
21	1	-	-	-
22	1	-	-	-
23	2	-	-	-
24	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
25	2	-	-	-
26	3	-	-	-
27	2	-	Oboe 1 also as *da caccia*	-
Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe 28	2	-	-	1
29	2	-	-	-
30	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
31	1 Oboe 2 optional Oboe 3 optional	Oboe 1 can be as *d'amore* Oboe 2 can be *d'amore*	-	1, optional
32	1	-	-	-
33	2	-	-	-
34	2	-	-	-
35	2	-	-	1
36	-	1 (2 *Oboe d'amore* in later version)	-	-
37	-	2	-	-
38	2	-	-	-
39	2	-	-	-

40	2	-	-	-
41	3	-	-	-
42	2	-	-	-
43	2	-	-	-
44	2	-	-	-
45	1	1	-	-
46	-	-	2	-
47	2	-	-	-
48	2	-	-	-
49	-	1	-	-
50	3	-	-	-
51	-	-	-	-
52	3	-	-	-
53	-	-	-	-
54	-	-	-	-
55	1	Oboe 1 can be *d'amore*	-	-
56	2	-	-	1
57	2	-	-	1
58	2	-	-	1
59	-	-	-	-
60	-	2	-	-
61	-	-	-	-
62	2	-	-	-
63	3	-	-	-
Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe 64	-	1	-	-

65	-	-	2	-
66	2	-	-	-
67	-	2	-	-
68	2	-	-	1
69	3	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
70	1	-	-	-
71	2	-	-	-
72	2	-	-	-
73	2	-	-	-
74	2	-	1	-
75	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
76	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
77	2	-	-	-
78	2	-	-	-
79	2	-	-	-
80	3	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	Oboe 1 also as *da caccia*	Oboe 3 also as *Taille*
81	-	2	-	-
82	1	-	-	-
83	2	-	-	-
84	1	-	-	-
85	2	-	-	-
86	2	-	-	-
87	2	-	1	-

			Oboes 1 and 2 also as *da caccia*	
88	-	2	-	1
89	2	-	-	-
90	-	-	-	-
91	3	-	-	-
92	-	2	-	-
93	2	-	-	-
94	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
95	*D'amore* 1 and 2 as Oboe, end of mvt. 1	2	-	-
96	2	-	-	-
97	2	-	-	-
98	2	-	-	1
99	-	1	-	-
100	-	1	-	-
101	2	-	Oboe 1 also as *da caccia*	1
102	2	-	-	-
103	-	2	-	-
104	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	1
105	2	-	-	-
106	-	-	-	-
107	-	2	-	-
108	-	2	-	-

109	2	-	-	-
110	3	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	Oboe 3 also as *da caccia*	-
111	2	-	-	-
112	-	2	-	-
113	-	2	-	-
114	2	-	-	-
115	-	1	-	-
116	-	2	-	-
117	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
118	- (1 in an alternate score)	-	-	-
119	3	-	2 oboes also as *da caccia*	-
120	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe 121	-	1	-	-
Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe 122	2	-	-	1
123	-	2	-	-
124	-	1	-	-
125	1	1	-	-
126	2	-	-	-
127	2	-	-	-
128	2	Oboes 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	1	-
129	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-

		Oboe 2 can be also as *d'amore*		
130	3	-	-	-
131	1	-	-	-
132	1	-	-	-
133	-	2	-	-
134	2	-	-	-
135	2	-	-	-
136	1	1 Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
137	2	-	-	-
138	-	2	-	-
139	-	2	-	-
140	2	-	-	1
141	2	-	-	-
142	2	-	-	-
143	-	-	-	-
144	2 Only in later edition	1 In all Bach editions	-	-
145	-	2	-	-
146	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	1
147	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *da caccia*	-
148	-	2	1	-
149	3	-	-	-
150	-	-	-	-

151	-	1	-	-
Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe 152	1	-	-	-
153	-	-	-	-
154	-	2	-	-
155	-	-	-	-
156	1	-	-	-
157	-	1	-	-
158	1	-	-	-
159	1	-	-	-
160	-	-	-	-
161	-	-	-	-
162	-	-	-	-
Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe 163	-	1 Only in 1715 Edition, not in Leipzig version	-	-
164	2	-	-	-
165	-	-	-	-
166	1	-	-	-
167	1	-	Oboe also as *da caccia*	-
168	-	2	-	-
169	-	2	-	1
170	-	1	-	-
171	2	-	-	-
172	-	-	-	-
173	-	-	-	-

174	2	-	-	1
175	-	-	-	-
176	2	-	1	-
177	2	-	Oboe 1 also as *da caccia*	-
178	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
179	2	-	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *da caccia*	-
180	1	-	1	-
181	1	-	-	-
182	-	-	-	-
183	-	2	2	-
184	-	-	-	-
Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe 185	1 (Or as trumpet in mvt. 1)	-	-	-
186	2	-	*Taille* also as *oboe da caccia*	1
187	2	-	-	-
188	1	-	-	-
189	1	-	-	-
190	3	Oboe 1 as *d'amore* Solo (or Violin Solo)	-	-
191	2	-	-	-
192	2	-	-	-
193	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
194	3	-	-	-

195	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
196	-	-	-	-
197	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Trauerode 198	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut 199	1	-	-	-
Bekennen will ich 200	-	-	-	-
Ehre sei Gott 197a	-	1	-	-
Easter Oratorio 249	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Christmas Oratorio, 248 Part 1	2	Oboe 1 and 2 as *d'amore*	-	-
Christmas Oratorio, 248 Part 2	-	2	2	-
Christmas Oratorio, 248 Part 3	2	Oboe 1 and 2 as *d'amore*	-	-
Christmas Oratorio, 248 Part 4	2	-	-	-
Christmas Oratorio, 248 Part 5	-	2	-	-
Christmas Oratorio, 248 Part 6	2	Oboe 1 and 2 as *d'amore*	-	-
St. Matthew Passion 244	Chorus 1: 2 Chorus 2: 2	Chorus 1: Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore* Chorus 2: Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	Chorus 1: Oboe 1 and 2 as *da caccia* Chorus 2: -	-
St. John Passion 245	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	Oboes 1 and 2 also as *da caccia*	-

Hohe Messe (Mass in B Minor) 232	3	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Mass in F 233	2	-	-	-
Mass in G Minor 235	2	-	-	-
Mass in G Major 236	2	-	-	-
Magnificat 243	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Sanctus in C 237	2	-	-	-
Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe Sanctus in G Major 240	2	-	-	-
Aeolus 205	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Angenehmes Wiederau 30a	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Hercules 213	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Ich bin in mir vergnügt 204	2	-	-	-
Mit Gnaden bekröne 134a	2	-	-	-
Phoebus und Pan 201	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Preise dein' Glücke 215	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Schleicht, spielende Wellen 206	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Tönet, ihr Pauken 214	2	Oboe 1 also as *d'amore*	-	-
Vereinigte Zweitracht 207	2	Oboe 1 and 2 also as *d'amore*	-	1
Was mir behagt 208	2	-	*Taille* as *da caccia*	1

Weichet nur 202	1	-	-	-
O holder Tag (O angenehme Melodie) 210	-	1	-	-

139 140 141

[139] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 207-22.

[140] Neue-Bach Ausgabe. 1954-1997. "Series I: Cantatas. *International Music Score Library Project*. https://imslp.org/wiki/Neue_Bach-Ausgabe_(Bach,_Johann_Sebastian).

[141] Bach-Gesellschaft Ausgabe. 1851-1926. *International Music Score Library Project*. https://imslp.org/wiki/Bach-Gesellschaft_Ausgabe_(Bach,_Johann_Sebastian).

Appendix B

Historically Informed Fingering Chart Likely Used in Bach's Orchestra

The following fingerings are drawn from Bruce Haynes's "Oboe Fingering Charts, 1695-1816," using the most likely fingerings that were available to Bach's oboists throughout his life. The most likely chart given is from Johann Phillip Eisel in 1738 Erfurt, Germany. The geographical proximity to Bach's places of work gives it special significance to the possible norms of his musicians. This chart also gives fingerings up to *e''' and f'''*, which were not present in earlier charts.[142] These high notes could give context for the high Es written in Cantatas 43, 128, and 192.[143] Finger 7 represents the D# key, and 8 represents the Low C key.[144]

Modern Notation	Baroque Notation	Likely Fingering on Baroque Instruments
C4	*c'*	123 456 8
C#4 / D♭4	*c#' / d♭'*	123 456 8, with 8 partially depressed.[145]
D4	*d'*	123 456
D#4 / E♭4	*d#' / e♭'*	123 456 7
E4	*e'*	123 45
F4	*f'*	123 4 6
F#4 / G♭4	*f#' / g♭'*	123 5
G4	*g'*	123
G#4 / A♭4	*g#' / a♭'*	12 4
A4	*a'*	12
A#4 / B♭4	*a#' / b♭'*	13

[142] Haynes, "Oboe Fingering Charts," 74.

[143] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 96-97.

[144] Haynes, "Oboe Fingering Charts," 72.

[145] Terry, *Bach's Orchestra*, 95.

B4	*b'*	1
C5	*c''*	2
C#5 / D♭5	*c#'' / d♭''*	3 7
D5	*d''*	123 456
D#5 / E♭5	*d#'' / e♭''*	123 456 7
E5	*e''*	123 45
F5	*f''*	123 4 6 7
F#5 / G♭5	*f#'' / g♭''*	123 56
G5	*g''*	123
G#5 / A♭5	*g#'' / a♭''*	12 4
A5	*a''*	12
A#5 / B♭5	*a#'' / b♭''*	13
B5	*b''*	1
C6	*c'''*	2 7
C#6 / D♭6	*c#''' / d♭'''*	23 4 8
D6	*d'''*	23 8
D#6 / E♭6	*d#''' / e♭'''*	No fingering until Vogt chart, 1776.
E6	*e'''*	12 56 8 in different version of Eisel chart
F6	*f'''*	12 56 or 12 56 7 in different versions of Eisel