

## C. P. E. BACH'S EVANGELIST: JOHANN HEINRICH MICHEL<sup>1</sup>

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In contrast to Johann Sebastian Bach's tenure at Leipzig, where precious little is known about his church singers, there is ample documentation for Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach's *Kapelle* at Hamburg. One of Bach's most important tenors in Hamburg, Johann Heinrich Michel, also happens to have been Bach's most prolific copyist.<sup>2</sup> Michel normally sang the role of Evangelist in the twenty-one Passions performed between 1769 and 1789, the only exceptions being the St. Luke settings of 1771, 1779, and 1787, which do not call for a tenor Evangelist. In addition, Michel was assigned arias in cantatas and works that Bach composed for special occasions. By analyzing the specific characteristics of arias (range and tessitura, passage work, tonality, and affective qualities of the vocal lines), we see how Bach employed him as a soloist in Hamburg.<sup>3</sup>

When Charles Burney visited Bach in Hamburg on Saturday, 10 October 1772, he wrote:

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<sup>1</sup>This paper is based on my presentation at the American Bach Society meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, in May 2010. A longer version appears in *Er ist der Vater, wir sind die Bub'n: Essays in Honor of Christoph Wolff*, edited by Paul Corneilson and Peter Wollny (Ann Arbor: Steglein Publishing, 2010), 95–118.

<sup>2</sup>See Paul Kast, *Die Bach-Handschriften der Berliner Staatsbibliothek* (Trossingen: Hohner, 1958) as well as the more recent survey in Keiichi Kubota, *C. P. E. Bach: A Study of His Revisions and Arrangements* (Tokyo: Academia Music, 2004), appendix 2, 188–90.

<sup>3</sup>There is a long tradition of secondary literature on the singers of Handel and Mozart, but relatively little on the singers of J. S. Bach, largely because there is little documentation on their careers. For a recent survey see Andreas Glöckner, "Alumni und Externe in den Kantoreien der Thomasschule zur Zeit Bachs," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 92 (2006): 9–36; for information on the bass Johann Christoph Samuel Lipsius, see Hans-Joachim Schulze, "Studenten als Bachs Helfer bei der Leipziger Kirchenmusik," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 70 (1984): 45–52.