

Praise to all music which soars to inspire!

Praise to the wonders of Thy artistry.

Charles A. Silvestri



Johann Sebastian Bach

Cantata No 92 Ich hab in Gottes Herz und Sinn

Ola Gjeilo

Ecce Novum

Dark Night of the Soul

The Ground

Luminous Night of the Soul

presented by

Brisbane Concert Choir

with

Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra ensemble

John Woods on piano

soloists Bronwyn Cox Nicolie Jenkins

Connor Willmore Michael Strasser

conducted by

Dr Debra Shearer-Dirié

In this first major performance for 2022 the singers of the Brisbane Concert Choir are offering praise to two choral composers separated by nearly 300 years.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) used the cantata genre to inspire the congregation every Sunday with the divine unity of words from the Scripture and his masterful music writing. Cantata 92 "*Ich hab in Gottes Herz und Sinn*" was composed for Septuagesima, the third Sunday before Lent, in Bach's second year as Thomaskantor in Leipzig. In the second movement, the bass soloists leads us through the text, combined with the chorale theme, reminding us God is keeping watch over our souls and making our hearts stand firm.

The simple instrumentation used by Bach in this cantata combines a string ensemble with the warm timbre of two oboe d'amores, often in conversation with each other. The chorale (12 stanza hymn by Paul Gerhardt) is interwoven through the nine movements with an elegant air. Perhaps the pinnacle of this cantata is the fourth movement where the alto section combines with the oboe d'amores and continuo in a beautiful setting.

The Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978) also has a unique way of uniting text and music. Masterfully, Gjeilo manipulates the timbre of an SATB choir, combining human voices with a string quartet and piano to convey the texts of Charles A. Silvestri, St. John of the Cross, *Piæ Cantiones Ecclesiasticæ Et Scholasticæ Veterum Episcoporum* and the Sanctus in the Ordinary of the Mass. Through this music one can hear the torment of the soul on its journey, ultimately to jubilation. Gjeilo's harmonic language is able to 'drown' sorrow as well as 'elevate' joy and happiness.

The "life of the soul" will be delivered to a place where words alone can never attempt to go
