

### J. S. Bach's Johannine Theology: The St. John Passion and the Cantatas for Spring 1725

Eric Chafe

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J. S. Bach's Johannine Theology: The St. John Passion and the Cantatas for Spring 1725 Eric Chafe Bach's Johannine Theology: The St. John Passion and the Cantatas for Spring 1725 is a fertile examination of this group of fourteen surviving liturgical works. Renowned Bach scholar Eric Chafe begins his investigation into Bach's theology with the composer's St. John Passion, concentrating on its first and last versions. Beyond providing a uniquely detailed assessment of the passion, Bach's Johannine Theology is the first work to take the work beyond the scope of an isolated study, considering its meaning from a variety of musical and historical standpoints. Chafe thereby uncovers a range of theological implications underlying Bach's creative approach itself.

Building considerably on his previous work, Chafe here expands his methodological approach to Bach's vocal music by arguing for a multi-layered approach to religion in Bach's compositional process. Chafe bases this approach primarily on two aspects of Bach's theology: first, the specific features of Johannine theology, which contrast with the more narrative approach found in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke); and second, contemporary homiletic and devotional writings - material that is not otherwise easily accessible, and less so in English translation. Bach's Johannine Theology provides an unprecedented, enlightening exploration of the theological and liturgical contexts within which this music was first heard.



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