

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 112

Form: Chorus/Fantasia - Aria (A) - Arioso/Recit (B) - Duet (S/T) - Chorale.

BWV 112 is a chorale cantata that retains the chorale text in each movement (per omnes versus) For more about Bach's chorale cantatas that follow this model, see note.

J.S. Bach Cantata No. 112

The underlying chorale melody is different from one that was often used at the time (see note). Allusions to the underlying chorale melody appear in all three inner movements. For another setting of this chorale tune, see BWV 128.

Der Herr ist mein getreuer Hirt

(Chorale Verse 1) (Perhaps from an earlier work—the movement survives as a fair copy, suggesting that it was copied from an existing score.)

•Shepherd's Psalm: paraphrase of Psalm 23:1-2 (112/1).

Vers 1. (Coro.) (Moderato $\text{♩} = 92$)

112/1. *Ob d'am I/Vln I*

Corno I
Corno II
Ritornello *mf*
Chorale head motive.
Ob d'am I/Vln I

G major (for significance, see note).

Concerto-like exchange between horns and strings (which are doubled by oboes d'amore). For Alfred Dürr's comments, see side note.

Instrumentation:

Corno I, II
Oboe d'amore I, II
Vln I, II
Vla
SATB
Continuo

4. G major B minor D7 G major

8. *Figura corta (see note).*
G major

(Mel: „Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr.“)

12. **Soprano.** Line 1. (Corno I doubles the cantus firmus here; Corno II continues with 3-note figures like hunting calls.)

CO RO.

Soprano. *+Corno I*
Der Herr ist mein ge...

Alto. *Stollen 1 of chorale's bar form.* Imitative counterpoint based on the chorale's first phrase.
Der Herr ist mein ge-treu...

Tenore.
Der Herr ist mein, ist mein

Basso.
Der Herr ist

G major G major

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15.

treu - - - er Hirt,
 - - - - - er Hirt,
 ge - treu - - - er Hirt,
 mein ge - treu - er Hirt,

The lower voices do not repeat the words as in other chorale fantasias.

18.

Line 2.

G major

hält mich in sei - - - ner
 hält mich in
 hält mich in sei - - - - - ner
 hält mich in sei - - - - - ner Hu - te, hält mich in

Imitative counterpoint based on the chorale's first phrase.

G major

G7

A minor

G major

21.

Hu - - - - - te,
 sei - ner Hu - - - - - te,
 Hu - - - - - te,
 sei - ner Hu - - - - - te,

= m. 2b. = m. 3.

G major

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24.

= m. 4. = m. 5. = m. 6. = m. 7.

G major B minor D7 G major

28.

= m. 8. = m. 9. = m. 10.

G major

31. **A** Line 3.

da - - - rin mir gar nichts

da - rin mir gar nichts man -

da - rin mir gar nichts, gar

da - rin mir

Stollen 2 (music repeats).

= m. 11. = m. 12. = m. 13. = m. 14.

G major G major

35.

man - - - geln wird

- - - - geln wird

nichts man - - - geln wird

gar nichts man - geln wird

= m. 15. = m. 16. = m. 17.

G major

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38. Line 4.

ir - gend an ei - nem

ir - gend an

ir - gend an ei - nem

ir - gend an ei - nem Gu - te, irgend an

= m. 18. = m. 19. = m. 20.

41. G major G7 G major A minor B Line 5.

Gu - te. Er

ei - nem Gu - te.

Gu - te. Er wei - det

ei - nem Gu - te.

= m. 21. = m. 22a.

Abgesang of chorale's bar form.

45. B7 E minor

wei - det mich ohn' Un - ter - lass,

Er wei - det mich ohn' Un - ter - lass,

mich ohn' Un - ter - lass, er wei - det mich ohn' Un - ter - lass,

Er wei - det mich ohn' Un - ter - lass,

Imitative counterpoint related to the chorale's first phrase.

E major A minor A minor

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49. Line 6.

da - rauf wächst

Imitative counterpoint related to the chorale's first phrase.

E minor A7 D major D7

52.

rauf wächst das wohl - schmek - kend''

da - rauf wächst das wohl - schmek - kend''

das wohl - schmek - kend''

das wohl - schmek - kend''

G major E minor

55.

Gras

Gras

Gras

Gras

Alto and tenor cut out, allowing an early return to E minor.

B major E minor E minor

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59. Line 7.

sei - nes heil - sa - men Wor - tes, sei - nes heil - sa - men Wor - tes, sei - nes heil - sa - men Wor - tes.

Imitative counterpoint related to the chorale's first phrase.

E minor E7 A minor G major

63.

tes. tes. tes. tes.

= m. 2b. = m. 3. = m. 4. = m. 5.

G major G major B minor

67.

= m. 6. = m. 7. = m. 8.

D7 G major

70.

= m. 9. = m. 10. = m. 11. = m. 12a.

G major G major

Alfred Dürr writes, "The second movement, an aria with obligato oboe d'amore, is based on a new minor-mode theme, which may nonetheless (if value is attached to such thematic links) be construed as an inversion of the opening of the chorale. Formally, the aria unites the two Stollen of the hymn verse to form the first vocal section and fashions a second section—related to the first—out of the Abgesang. Its bipartite design, A A', thus follows neither the textual scheme nor the da capo form then so popular in aria composition." See Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. .

Vers 2. Aria. (Chorale Verse 2) • Shepherd's Psalm: paraphrase of Psalm 23:2-3 (112/2).

112/2. (Andante con moto ♩ = 50.)

The oboe d'amore suggests a shepherd scene, the flowing 16th notes presumably representing the "fresh waters" mentioned in the text.

Form (Rhyme ABABCCD; Reprisenbar musical form.)
 Ritornello (mm. 1-18) DM
 Stollen 1: Lines 1-2 (19-34) DM-AM
 Rit (34-52) AM-DM
 Stollen 2: Lines 3-4 (53-68) DM-AM
 Rit (68-74) AM
 Abgesang: Line 5 (75-92) EM-GM
 Reprise: Lines 6-7 (92-107) GM-DM

Ob. d'amore

Ritornello derived from vocal line.

Continuo alone... E minor

"Fresh water" is metaphorically interpreted as the Holy Spirit (Jesus' "living water"). See more below.

4.

D major G major

7.

B7 E minor F#7 B minor

Stollen 1 of chorale's bar form.

10. **Alto.**

This type of aria is called a "Devisenarie" (a term coined by Hugo Riemann) or "motto aria." After the ritornello, the singer presents the first phrase of the aria as a kind of motto. This is followed by a short instrumental bridge before the aria proper begins. The motto sets the tone (and the literary perspective) for the movement. Here the lilting meter and timbre of the oboe d'amore suggest the pastoral scene of a shepherd leading his flock (down) to the water, as referenced in the text.

Line 1.
Zum

B minor (B7) E minor B minor F#7 B(7)

13. Text painting: Descending line "down" to fresh waters.

rei - nen Was - ser er - mich weist,

p *mf*

E minor

16.

Line 2.

zum rei - nen Was - ser er - mich weist, das

E minor E minor E minor

19. Word painting: Figura corta for "erquicken" ("refresh").



mich er - quicken, er - quik - ken thu - e, das mich er - quicken, er -

Figura corta (see note).

E minor D major

22.

Veiled allusion to the chorale tune?

hemiola

quik - ken thu - e, das - mich er-quicken, er-quik - ken thu - e.

G major A# dim.7 F# major B minor

25.

Line 3.

Das ist - sein fron - hei -

Stollen 2.

B minor B minor

In the day's Gospel reading, Jesus Identifies himself as the Good Shepherd (a designation reinforced in the day's Epistle). Elsewhere, Jesus offers the "living water," that is, the Holy Spirit, who leads believers in paths of truth. These connections suggest a constellation of biblical passages (see note).



28.

li - ger Geist, das ist sein fron -

B minor

Detailed description: This system contains measures 28, 29, and 30. The vocal line starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and quarter notes in the left hand. The key signature is B minor.

31. Word painting: 15th-note, scalar melisma for "Geist" ("Spirit"). Line 4.

- hei - li - ger Geist, der macht mich

A7 D major G major

Detailed description: This system contains measures 31, 32, and 33. The vocal line features a 15-note scalar melisma for the word "Geist" in measure 32. The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. The key signature changes from B minor to D major in measure 32 and then to G major in measure 33.

34.

wohl - ge - mu - the, der macht mich wohl - - - ge - mu - -

G major

Detailed description: This system contains measures 34, 35, and 36. The vocal line has a trill (tr) on the final note of measure 36. The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature is G major. The dynamic marking *mf* is present in measure 36.

37.

the.

G major G major

Detailed description: This system contains measures 37, 38, and 39. The vocal line has a fermata on the word "the." in measure 37. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic and melodic patterns. The key signature remains G major.

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40.

B7

43.

E minor (G7) C major D7 G major A7 D major

46.

Abgesang of chorale's bar form.

Line 5. Line 6.

Er füh - ret mich auf rech - ter Strass' sei -

D major D major

49.

- ner Ge - bo - ten ohn' Ab - lass, er füh - - - - ret

B7 E minor F# major B minor E7

52.

mich auf rech - ter Strass' sei - - - - ner Ge - bo - - - - ten

A minor D7 G major D# dim.7 B7

55.

ohn' Ab - lass, er füh - ret mich auf

E minor E minor E major A minor

58.

rech - ter ~~Stass'~~ ^{Stress'} sei - - ner Ge - bo -

Possible veiled allusion to the chorale tune?
Coloratura stresses "Geboten" ("commandments").

A minor G7 D# dim.7 B7 E minor D7

61.

- ten ohn' Ab - lass, ohn' Ab - lass von

without ceasing,

G major E7 A minor F#7 B7

Ascending chromatic fourth (for significance, see note).

Line 7.

Text painting: Pulsing bass notes for "[He leads me on the right road of his commandments] without ceasing ("ohn Ablaß").

64.

we - gen sei - nes Na - mens wil - len, von we - gen

Bach adds the word "willen" ("sake") to the chorale stanza, making the wording closer to the Biblical psalm.

E minor E minor E7 A minor

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67. hemiola

sei - - nes Na -

Coloratura stresses "Namen" ("[for the sake of his] name").

D# dim.7 B7 E minor

70.

mens wil - len.

E minor E minor

73.

E minor D major

76.

G major E minor N6

79.

G7 D# dim.7 B7 E minor A minor (deceptive) E7 B7 E minor E minor

Vers 3. Recitativo.

112/3. **Arioso.** (♩ = 72.) (Chorale Verse 3) • Shepherd's Psalm: paraphrase of Psalm 23:4 (112/3).

Stollen 1 of chorale's bar form.

1. Basso.

This is a highly original movement, characterized by great harmonic instability and modulation to remote keys. To depict "wandering in the dark valley," an ostinato bass in the lowest continuo register treads downward in C major, while the singer wanders around imperviously, repeating the text as if to reassure himself.

The arioso section is an almost verbatim rendering of the Psalm text.

Bach adds the word "und" ("and") to the chorale stanza, making the wording closer to the Biblical psalm.

Und ob ich
And though I

mf Continuo alone...

C major (for significance, see note).

Descending line is an 8va lower (see full score). C major
Text painting: The wandering sheep descends one 8va (from C to C) down into the dark valley.

wandert' im fin- stern Thal, im finstern Thal, fürcht' ich kein Un-ge- lük

wanter in-the dark valley, fear I no calamity

Chromatic inflection for "dark valley."

mf

Singer and continuo tug in different harmonic directions...

D7 G major C major C7 (F major) G7 C major C7 G7

The text is stated 3 times (with internal repetitions) as if the speaker is reassuring himself. The continuo's low register reinforces the threat of the dark valley.

ke, und ob ich wandert' im fin- stern Thal, im fin- stern Thal,

Chromatic inflection for "finstern" (dark").

mf

C major C major (C minor) G7

fürcht' ich kein Un- ge- lük - - ke, und ob ich

Chromatic inflection for "calamity."

C major D7 G minor (D major)

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Whole tone descent for "finstern Thal."

10.

wandert' im fin-stern Thal, im fin-stern Thal, fürcht' ich doch kein Un-

dark valley

D7 G minor G minor

Adagio.

Chromatic saturation in the vocal part in the equivalent of 6 mm.

12.

ge-lük-ke in Ver-folgung, Leiden, Trübsal und die-ser Wel-te

in persecution, suffering, tribulation and this world's

Line 3. G A-flat B-flat D-flat F E Line 4. C

Stollen 2.

"Halo" of strings begins to symbolize God's presence in the midst of trials as referenced in the text.

G minor E-flat 7 E dim.7 F minor

15.

Tücke: denn du bist bei mir stetig-lich, dein Stab und Stecken trö-sten

treachery; for thou art with me constantly, thy staff and rod comfort

Line 5. Line 6. A

Vln II

Veiled allusion to the chorale tune. Christi's presence (symbolized by the strings) is recognized.

F minor D minor E major E7 A minor

Phrygian cadence, often used for questions.

18.

mich, auf-dein Wort, auf dein Wort, auf dein Wort ich mich las-se.

me, on thy Word, I - rely. Descending strings for "lasse" ("rely on" or "entrust").

Line 7. F#

The last line recalls biblical passages such as Psalm 119:42, 43, 49, 81, and 114.

A minor D7 G major G major

The tonality returns to G major.

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Form (Rhyme ABABCCD)
 Ritornello (mm. 1-18) DM
 A. Stollen 1: Lines 1-2 (19-34)
 DM-AM
 Rit (35-52 = 1-18) AM-DM
 A. Stollen 2: Lines 3-4 (53-68=19-34)
 DM-AM
 Rit (69-74) AM
 B. Abgesang: Line 5 (75-92)
 EM-GM
 A'. Lines 6-7 (92-107=19-34)
 GM-DM
 Rit (1-18) DM

Vers 4. Duetto. (Chorale Verse 4) • Shepherd's Psalm: paraphrase of Psalm 23:5 (112/4).

(Allegretto $\text{♩} = 72$.) Violins in 2-part canon...

Streams of 8th notes are later associated with "geistlich Freuden" ("spiritual joys")—see m. 95ff.

112/4. Vln I 1.

Figura corta (see above).

Ritornello related to vocal theme (allusion to the chorale tune).

D major

Bourée-like, with galant elements that include Lombard rhythm, syncopation, and internal repetition.

5.

A major E7 A major A major

10.

A7 D major D7 G major A7

The triplets develop out of the Lombard rhythm. In the Abgesang of the chorale stanza, the triplets are associated with "Freuden Öl" ("oil of joy"). See m. 74ff.

14.

D major A7 D major

18. Soprano.

Martin Petzoldt suggests that the syncopation in the first Stollen signifies opposition against the enemies referenced in the text; in the second Stollen it reflects jubilation. See *Bach Kommentar* 2:808.

Singers in 2-part canon... Syllable stress is determined by musical rhythm rather than normal declamation.

Tenore. Line 1.

Line 2.

Stollen 1 of chorale's bar form.

Du be-reitest für mir ei-nen Tisch vor mein'n Feinden al-lent-

p sempre

D major D major D major

Alfred Dürr notes, "The canonic entry of the voice parts, as of the violins previously, is not at all 'learned' in effect because the sequence of entries is subordinate to the movement's four-bar phrase-structure. The theme—a slightly simplified vocal form of the ritornello melody—is more clearly derived from the chorale melody than that of the previous aria. The form of the aria (Bar with reprise) follows that of the chorale. Due

22.

Texture changes to 5-part counterpoint.

NBA: für

piu piano
 Du bereitest für mir einen Tisch vor meinen Feinden allenthal -
 hal - ben, allenthal - ben, du be -

A major A major A major E7 A major

27.

- ben, du be - reitest für mir einen Tisch vor
 reitest für mir einen Tisch vor mei - nen - Fein -

E7 A major

31.

Tritone for "Feinden" ("enemies").

meinen Fein - den allenthal - ben, allenthal - ben,
 - den allenthal - ben,

Chromatic/dissonant harmonies for "Feinde" ("enemies"). *Violins in 2-part canon...*

Vln I
mf Ritornello

D# dim.7 E7 A major A7

35.

= m. 1. *f* = m. 2. = m. 3. = m. 4. *f* = m. 5.

D major A major E7

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40. = m. 6. = m. 7. = m. 8. = m. 9.

A major E7 A major A major

44. = m. 10. = m. 11. = m. 12. = m. 13.

A7 D major D7 G major A7

48. = m. 14. = m. 15. = m. 16. = m. 17.

D major A7 D major

52. **Soprano.** Line 3. Line 4.

Stollen 2 (the music for Stollen 1 repeats **but with lines switched**).

machst mein Her-ze un - - ver - zagt und frisch, mein Haupt thust du - mir

Singers in 2-part canon... = m. 18 (lines switched). = m. 19 = m. 20. = m. 21.

D major D major D major

56. sal -

Tenore.

machst mein Her-ze un - - ver - zagt und frisch, mein Haupt thust du mir

= m. 22. = m. 23. = m. 24. = m. 25.

A major A major A major E7 A major

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60.

ben, machst mein Herze un - - - ver - zagt und frisch. mein Haupt thust du
sal - - - ben, machst mein Herze un - - ver -

= m. 26. = m. 27. = m. 28. = m. 29.

E7 A major

64.

mir sal - - - zagt und frisch, mein Haupt thust du mir sal - - - ben, thust du - mir sal -

= m. 30. = m. 31. = m. 32. = m. 33.

Tritone

D# dim.7 E7 A major

68.

ben (= m. 34)

ben

f Vln II, Vla Vln I

Ritornello

f

A major A7 D major E7 (A major) E7

72. Soprano.

mit dei - - - nem

Abgesang of chorale's bar form.

Line 5.

Vin II doubling alto...

pp

E7 A major A major

Word painting: Coloraturas of triplets for "Freuden Öl" ("oil of joy").

76.

Geist, der Freu - - - - - den - - - - -

Tenore.

mit dei - - - - - nem

Via doubling tenor...

B minor D major (B minor) B minor B minor A7 B7

80.

Öl, mit dei - nem , Geist, der Freu - - - - - den Öl, mit

Geist, der Freu - - - - -

Harmonic wandering...

E minor C# dim.7 E major

83.

dei - - - - - nem Geist, der Freu - - - - -

- - - - - den - - - - - Öl, mit dei - nem Geist, der Freu - - - - -

(E7) A major A7 (D major) E7

86.

den Öl, mit deinem Geist, der Freu -

den Öl, mit dei - nem Geist, der Freu -

Harmonic wandering...

A major A7 D major D7 (G major) D major

90.

Line 6. Reprise in subdominant with lines switched.

Line 7.

den Öl, und schenkest voll ein meiner Seel' dei -

den Öl. cf. m. 19. cf. m. 20.

D major D7 G major

94.

Word painting: Streams of 8th notes depict "geistlich Freuden" ("spiritual joys")—compare the ritornello's Fortspinnung.

ner geistlichen Freu -

cf. m. 21. cf. m. 22. cf. m. 23. cf. m. 24.

und schenkest voll ein meiner Seel' dei -

G major D major D major D major A7

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98.

- den, und schenkest voll ein, schenkest voll ein meiner

ner geistlichen Freu - den, und schenkest

cf. m. 25, cf. m. 26. cf. m. 27. cf. m. 28.

D major A7

102.

Seel' - - - - - dei - ner geist - - - - - li - chen

voll ein, schenkest voll ein, und schenkest voll ein -

cf. m. 29. cf. m. 30. cf. m. 31.

Tritone

D major G# dim.7

105.

Freu - - - - - den.

meiner Seel' deiner geistlichen Freu - den.

cf. m. 32. cf. m. 33. cf. m. 34.

Vln I Violins in 2-part canon... mf

A7 D major D major D major

Dal Segno.

Martin Petzoldt argues that the cadential patterns hereresemble the rhythms of the head motive in movement 1 and tie the two movements together.

The final stanza serves as a catechismal response.

112/5. **Vers 5. Choral.** (Mel: „Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr.“)

Soprano. 1/5.

+Vln I
+Vln II
+Vla
Basso

Gu - tes und die Barm - her - zig - keit fol - gen mir nach im Le - ben,
und ich werd' bleiben al - le - zeit im Haus des Her - ren e - ben:

Corno I & II
Oboe d'amore I & II

G major G major G major G major

Bach may have added the Hn II part to a setting taken from his own collection of chorales (see note).



9.

auf Erd' in christ - li - cher Gemein', und nach dem Tod da
auf Erd' in christ - li - cher Ge - mein', und nach dem Tod da
auf Erd' in christ - li - cher Ge - mein', und nach dem Tod da
auf Erd' in christ - li - cher Ge - mein', und nach dem Tod da

G7 C major E7 A minor A minor D7 G major E7 A minor

12.

werd' ich sein bei Chri - sto, - mei - nem Her - ren.
werd' ich sein bei Chri - sto, - mei - nem Her - ren.
werd' ich sein bei Chri - sto, - mei - nem Her - ren.
werd' ich sein bei Chri - sto, - mei - nem Her - ren.

E minor B major E minor G major D# dim.7 E minor E minor D major G major