

Barnhouse Concert Band

SHEEP MAY SAFELY GRAZE

(Chorale from Cantata No. 208)

J. S. BACH by Alfred Reed

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PROGRAM NOTE

What is probably Johann Sebastian Bach's most pastoral composition, the gentle aria **Sheep May Safely Graze**, was originally written as part of a hunting cantata, entitled **Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd** ("What Pleases Me Is Just a Jolly Hunt"). Also, despite the traditional numbering of this cantata as 208, it was actually written quite early in Bach's career, and is his first secular cantata.

Emulating the great French "Sun-King," Louis XIV, European noblemen of the Baroque Era usually had elaborate festivities on their birthdays, often lasting for several days and usually including a foxhunt. Duke Christian von Sachsen-Weisenfels, himself a passionate hunter, followed this tradition and always had an elaborate hunt on his birthday. In 1716, to celebrate his 53rd birthday, the Duke planned just such a hunt, and one of the invited guests was his friend and fellow-aristocrat, Duke Ernst Wilhelm of Weimar, who brought with him a secular cantata as "a fine table music" to be performed at a banquet in the game-keeper's lodge. The composer of the cantata was, of course, Duke Ernst Wilhelm's own composer, the thirty-one year old J. S. Bach.

The plot of the cantata involved Diana, goddess of the hunt, being accused by her lover, Endymion, of being indifferent to him. She assures him of her love, confiding in him that she is preparing a special hunt for the birthday of Duke Christian von Sachsen-Weisenfels, and will honor him with a "kiss" (i.e., success in the hunt). Endymion, relieved, goes with her to honor the Duke. Also attending the festivities honoring the Duke, along with Diana and Endymion, are Pan, the god of music, and Pales, the goddess of shepherds and fields.

It is the aria of Pales, comparing the Duke to a good shepherd who cares for his "flock" (i.e., his subjects), assuring them that they can "safely graze" (i.e., live in peace), that is the well-known **Sheep May Safely Graze**, which has continued to be one of Bach's most popular works.

Bach's original setting for this aria calls for a simple accompaniment of two recorders and continuo for this gentle, pastoral music, in contrast to the corno di caccia (hunting horn) dominance of much of the rest of the work. The aria is a refreshing expression of calm and peace in an otherwise active and virile hunting cantata. The melody is apparently Bach's own, there being no evidence of his having borrowed it from another source. This is a typical early Bach cantata, with compact sections and a noticeable absence of elaborate complex writing.

Bach reworked the cantata several years later in Leipzig to honor the nameday of Kurfürst Ernst August of Sachsen-Weimar, changing the name from that of the Duke, despite the different accents of the two names.

Despite its original appearance as part of a virile hunting cantata, this gentle, pastoral aria remains one of Bach's most beloved and most frequently-performed works.

Dr. Raymond A. Barr
Associate Professor of Music Literature
University of Miami, Coral Gables, Fla.

NOTE TO CONDUCTOR

This adaptation for winds was prepared from the original version of this music given in the Bach Gesellschaft edition, and remains true to Bach's intentions as well as his rhythmic, melodic and harmonic elements. I have resisted the temptation to "simplify" the **look** of the music, rhythmically, by cutting each of Bach's original measures into two, changing the time values of the notes by doubling them, and placing the work in 4/4 as a result (instead of what it really is: 8/8) because the apparently simpler look of the music in this form of notation, by removing half of the beams, would, in my opinion, destroy the perception of the flow of the phrases themselves, on which so much of the overall effect of the texture rests.

The American composer, writer and commentator, Deems Taylor, once remarked that the best way in which to enjoy Bach's music is to eliminate the word "counterpoint" from one's vocabulary, and certainly such a recommendation would seem to apply to this work, one of Bach's most beloved individual pieces. There are really only two lines throughout, the original vocal line, and the descant of the two Recorders or Flutes above it. It follows then, that these two lines must be perfectly balanced against each other throughout the work. It may be thought a bit fanciful to say that the two descant lines represent a pair of sheep following the singer as she paints a picture of the peaceable kingdom through which they move together; nevertheless, such a picture may be taken as a starting point for the conception of a successful performance in an attempt to convey to the players the delicacy, lightness and transparency required for the fullest realization of the music's demands.

Nowhere will this required lightness and delicacy be more necessary than in the playing of the basso continuo, the gently throbbing line that accompanies the texture lying above it. The almost featherweight quality of tone that the traditional Cello-Bass octave of the orchestra has been able to provide for over 300 years, must be achieved in the wind group by the most careful playing of a single Baritone and Tuba (the latter doubled by String Bass, if available) with a smooth legato tongue attack throughout, and alternation between players for the sake of rests here and there. Even in the Band, as opposed to the Wind Ensemble, it would be only in the largest groups that more than one to each line might be necessary. Only in the coda, in the last two measures, when the full Brass section plays together, will all of the Baritones and Tubas join in.

Where dots appear over eighth notes, especially in the descant lines, these dots do not signify a true staccato, but only what may be termed a "half-staccato," so that there is a **slight** feeling of separation between the note so indicated and what comes next (a slight breathing space, so to speak), but never a cutting short of the tone to the point where there is no beauty, only sound.

And, of course, the legato of the main melodic line, largely in the single reeds in this version, but also, on occasion, in the English Horn and Saxophones, must be the purest, most sustained, most flowing that the players can produce; individual notes with lines over them must be attacked with a legato tongue and sustained for full value each time.

And above all else, the single key word to the fullest realization of the potential of this glorious early work of the young Bach is "singing." Each and every tone, line and phrase must be **sung**, regardless of what and where it may be.

Alfred Reed



ALFRED REED is a native New Yorker — born in Manhattan on January 25, 1921. His parents loved good music and made it part of their daily lives; as a result, he was well acquainted with most of the standard symphonic and operatic repertoire while still in elementary school.

Beginning formal music training at the age of ten, he studied trumpet and was playing professionally while still in High School. He worked on theory and harmony with John Sacco, and continued later as a scholarship student of Paul Yartin.

After three years at the Radio Workshop in New York, he enlisted in the Air Force during World War II, and was assigned to the 529th Army Air Force Band. During his three and a half years with this organization, Alfred Reed became deeply interested in the Concert Band and its music. He produced nearly 100 compositions and arrangements for band before leaving the Service.

Following his release, he enrolled at the Juilliard School of Music as a student of Vittorio Giannini. In 1948 he became a staff composer and arranger with NBC and, subsequently, ABC in New York, where he wrote and arranged music for radio and television, as well as for record albums and films.

In 1953 Mr. Reed became conductor of the Baylor Symphony Orchestra at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, at the same time completing his interrupted academic work. His Master's thesis was the RHAPSODY FOR VIOLA AND ORCHESTRA, which later was to win the Luria Prize. It received its first performance in 1959, and was published in 1966. During the two years at Baylor he also became interested in the problems of educational music at all levels, especially in the development of repertoire material for band, orchestra and chorus. This led, in 1955, to his accepting the post of editor in a major publishing firm. He left this position in September, 1966, to join the faculty of the School of Music at the University of Miami, as Professor of Music, holding a joint appointment in the Theory-Composition and Music Education Departments, and to develop the Unique Music Merchandising Degree Program at that institution.

With over 200 published works for Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Orchestra, Chorus and various smaller chamber music groups, many of which have been on the required performance lists for the past 15 years, Dr. Reed is one of the nation's most prolific and frequently performed composers. In addition to winning the Luria Prize in 1959, he has been awarded some 52 commissions to date... with more on the way! His work as a guest conductor and clinician has taken him to 40 states, Europe, Canada, Mexico, and South America, and for six consecutive years, six of his works have been on the required list of music for all Concert Bands in Japan. He left New York for Miami, Florida, in 1960, where he has made his home ever since.

In the Fall of 1980, following the retirement of Dr. Frederick Fennell, Dr. Reed was appointed conductor and music director of the University of Miami Symphonic Wind Ensemble.

Molto moderato e sostenuto (♩=72-76)

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Fls. 1 2 *mf* *Soli* **11** *f*

Fls. 3 *f*

Obs. 1 2 *f*

E.Hn. *f*

E♭Cl. *mf*

Cls. 1 *mf* *mp* *poco a poco cresc.* *f*

2 *mf* *mp* *poco a poco cresc.* *f*

3 *mf* *mp* *poco a poco cresc.* *f*

A.Cl. *p* *poco a poco cresc.* *f*

B.Cl. *poco a poco cresc.* *f*

Ch.Cl. *f*

Bsns. 1 2 *1. p* *2. p* *poco a poco cresc.* *f*

A.Saxs. 1 *sim.* *f*

2 *sim.* *f*

T.Sax. *p* *f sim.*

Bar.Sax. *f sim.*

Hns. 1 2 *1. cup mute* *mf*

3 4

Tpts. 1 2 *mf*

3

Cors. 1 2 *(still in cup mute)* *mf*

Trbs. 1 *mf*

2 *mf*

3

Bar. *mf*

Tuba *mf*

St.Bs. *f*

Timp. *mf*

Fls. 1 2 *p* *mf* *Soli*

Fl. 3 *p* *mp* *mf* *Soli*

Obs. 1 2 *mp* *mf*

E.Hn. *mp* *mf*

E♭Cl. *mf*

Cls. 1 *p* *mf*

2 *p* *mf*

3 *p* *mf*

A.Cl. *p*

B.Cl. *p*

Cb.Cl. *p*

Bsns. 1 2 *mp*

A.Saxs. 1 *pp* *p*

2 *pp*

T.Sax. *pp* *p*

Bar.Sax. *pp*

Hns. 1 2 *p* *a2*

3 4 *p*

Tpts. 1 2 *pp*

3 *pp*

Cors. 1 2 *pp* *pp* *cup mute* *a2* *mp*

Trbs. 1 *pp* *cup mute* *p*

2 *p* *pp*

3 *pp* *Hns. 3, 4.*

Bar. *p* *mp* *p*

Tuba *p* *mp* *p*

St.Bs. *p* *mp* *p*

Timp. *p*

17 *to Coda* 21

Fls. 1 2 *mf*

Fl. 3

Obs. 1 2 *mf*

E.Hn.

E♭Cl. 1 *mf*

Cl. 2 *mf*

3 *mf*

A.Cl. *p*

B.Cl. *p*

Cb.Cl. *p*

Bsns. 1 2 *p*

A.Saxs. 1 *p*

2 *p*

T.Sax. *p*

Bar.Sax. *p*

Hns. 1 2 *mf*

3 4 *mf*

Tpts. 1 2 *cup mute*

3 *mf*

Cors. 1 2 *mf*

Hn.3

Trbs. 2

3

Bar. *p*

Tuba *p*

St.Bs. *p*

Timp. *p*

Not valid for reference only

A 149

This image shows a page from a musical score, likely for a symphony or concert band. The score is written for a large ensemble, including the following instruments:

- Flutes (Fls.)
- Oboes (Obs.)
- English Horn (E.Hn.)
- E♭ Clarinet (EbCl.)
- Clarinets (Cls.)
- Alto Clarinet (A.Cl.)
- Bass Clarinet (B.Cl.)
- Contrabass Clarinet (Cb.Cl.)
- Bassoons (Bsns.)
- Alto Saxophones (A.Saxs.)
- Tenor Saxophone (T.Sax.)
- Baritone Saxophone (Bar.Sax.)
- Horns (Hns.)
- Trumpets (Tpts.)
- Cornets (Cors.)
- Bassoon 1 (Bsn.1)
- Bassoon 2 (Bsn.2)
- Trombones (Trbs.)
- Baritone (Bar.)
- Tuba
- St. Bass (St.Bs.)
- Timpani (Timp.)

The score is written in 4/4 time and features various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), *p* (piano), and *mp* (mezzo-piano). A large watermark "Copyrighted Material" is visible across the page.

Fls. 1 2

Fl. 3

Obs. 1 2

E.Hn.

E♭Cl.

1

Cl. 2

3

A.Cl.

B.Cl.

Cb.Cl.

Bsns. 1 2

A.Saxs. 1 2

T.Sax.

Bar.Sax.

Hns. 1 2 3 4

Tpts. 1 2 3

Cors. 1 2

Trbs. 1 2 3

Bar.

Tuba

St.Bs.

Timp.

p

sim.

This image shows a page from a musical score, likely for a symphony or concert band. The score is written for a large ensemble, including the following instruments:

- Fls. (Flutes)
- Fl. (Flute)
- Obs. (Oboes)
- E.Hn. (English Horn)
- E♭Cl. (E-flat Clarinet)
- Cl. (Clarinets)
- A.Cl. (Alto Clarinet)
- B.Cl. (Bass Clarinet)
- Cb.Cl. (Cello Clarinet)
- Bsns. (Bassoons)
- A.Saxs. (Alto Saxophones)
- T.Sax. (Tenor Saxophone)
- Bar.Sax. (Baritone Saxophone)
- Hns. (Horns)
- Tpts. (Trumpets)
- Cors. (Cornets)
- Trbs. (Trombones)
- Bar. (Baritone)
- Tuba
- St.Bs. (Snare Drum)
- Timp. (Timpani)

The score is written in 3/4 time and features various dynamic markings, including *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *p* (piano). A "D.C. al Coda" instruction is visible at the top right, indicating a repeat of the first ending. The score is marked with a large "Not Valid" watermark.

Coda poco rit.

The score consists of two systems of music. The first system includes staves for strings (Violins I, Violins II, Violas, Cellos, and Double Basses) and woodwinds (Flutes, Oboes, and Clarinets). The second system includes staves for brass (Trumpets, Trombones, and Tuba/Euphonium) and percussion (Timpani and Snare Drum). Dynamics such as *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte) are indicated throughout. The tempo marking *poco rit.* (slightly ritardando) is present at the beginning of the second system. The word *Coda* appears at the start of both systems. The score concludes with a final *mf* dynamic marking.