

J. S. BACH

WHAT IS THE WORLD TO ME

For Organ and Brass Quartet

Arranged by Barbara Harbach

What is the World to Me or *Was frag ich nach der Welt* is an arrangement based on two cantatas of J. S. Bach. The music itself is from Cantata 129, *Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott*, the fifth movement (chorale for chorus and instruments), written for Trinity Sunday, June 16, 1726. Cantata 129 was scored for soprano, alto, and bass soloists, four-voice chorus, three trumpets, timpani, flute, two oboes, Oboe d'amour, strings, solo violin, and continuo. The text most often used with this movement is excerpted from the fourth movement (for chorus) of Cantata 64, *Sehet, welch eine Liebe hat uns der Vater erzeiget*, written for the third day of Christmas, December 27, 1723. One popular English translation is by August Crull (1845-1923).

This festive and spirited arrangement for brass quartet and two-manual organ and pedal replaces the choral parts with the brass quartet, and the orchestral parts with the organ. As Bach intended, the first part features chorale phrases broken by instrumental counterpoint. This is followed by a statement of the chorale for the brass alone. The work ends with a repeat of the first section. The slurs and dynamic markings are standardized in the organ score and added to the trumpet parts for phrasing and clarity.

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What is the World to Me

from Cantata 129

J. S. BACH

arranged by Barbara Harbach

(Joyfully ♩ = 80)

Trumpet I

Trumpet II

Trombone I

Trombone II

Organ

Pedal

f (Reed)

mf

mf

4

f

f

f

f

7

Musical score for measures 7-9. The score is written for a piano and includes a vocal line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The piano part features a complex texture with multiple voices, including a right-hand voice with arpeggiated chords and a left-hand voice with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The vocal line consists of two staves, with the upper staff containing the melody and the lower staff providing a harmonic accompaniment. The music is characterized by long, sweeping phrases and a sense of harmonic movement.

10

Musical score for measures 10-12. The score continues from the previous system and maintains the same instrumentation and key signature. The piano part continues with its intricate texture, featuring a right-hand voice with arpeggiated chords and a left-hand voice with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The vocal line consists of two staves, with the upper staff containing the melody and the lower staff providing a harmonic accompaniment. The music is characterized by long, sweeping phrases and a sense of harmonic movement.