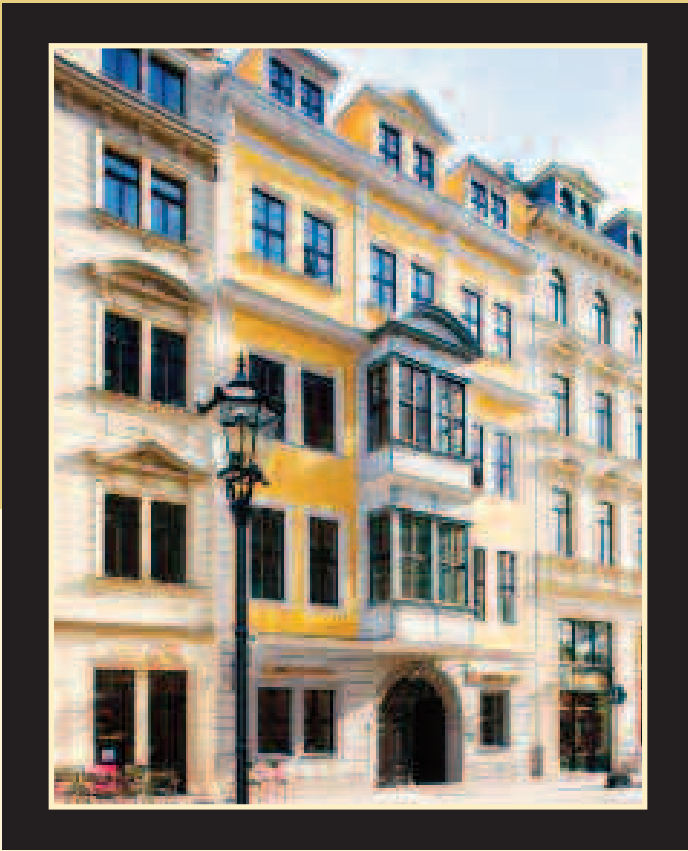


# Tafelmusik Salutes: Bach Museum, Leipzig



## The Museum Today

The **Bach Museum and Archive, Leipzig**, is housed in the residence of Georg Heinrich Bose, the close friend and neighbour of J.S. Bach in St. Thomas Square.

The Bach Archive, now a part of the University of Leipzig, is the centre for research and documentation of the life and works of J.S. Bach. It is instrumental in the creation of the authoritative edition of Bach's complete works, used by scholars and performers around the world.



In the museum, 12 thematically structured exhibition rooms are dedicated to the life and works of Bach. The exhibits bring his music to life, provide insights into the methods and various fields of Bach research, and show original Bach manuscripts and other precious items. Innovative and interactive displays allow visitors to take a guided guess at dating Bach manuscripts, to experience the music composed by his ancestors, to take a look at his apartments in the St. Thomas School, and to experience the sounds of Bach's orchestra.



The archive and museum work closely together, even engaging the general public in the process of solving scholarly problems.



**In the years since the time of Bose and Bach the residence has housed a dermatological practice, a yarn store, a hat shop, a wine shop, a restaurant, a bowling alley, a publishing house, a musical instrument museum, and a famous East-German political cabaret.**

All photos above by Jona Vaid

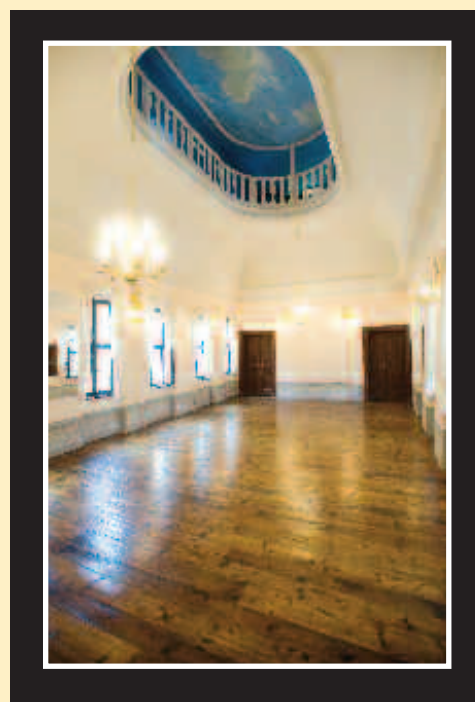
## The Bose House in the time of Bach

In 1710, one of Leipzig's most beautiful town houses was bought by the affluent merchant Georg Heinrich Bose. After 1723, when the Bachs moved into the cantor's apartments at the St. Thomas School, just a few houses away, the two families became close friends. Four of the Bose daughters became godmothers of Bach children.



The Bose house was built around a central courtyard. On the street level, there were storage rooms, stables, and a washhouse. Like many Leipzig houses, there was also commercial space for rent, used for a corner store and then for the office of a prominent municipal judge.

The residential area, one level up, was luxurious and comfortable. The parlours had stoves for warmth and many of the rooms had decorative ceilings.



## Music in the Bose House

One of the most striking ceilings was in the two-story high Summer Hall in the rear of the house. This elegant room with embedded mirrors had a movable ceiling painting which revealed a musicians' gallery when it was raised. Restored to its 18th-century state, the Summer Hall is used today for concerts.



All photos above by Gert Meibes

All nine children in the Bose house received music lessons. Christiana Sibylla, who was a bosom friend of Bach's second wife Anna Magdalena, played the harpsichord. Sophia Carolina played the lute, Christian Gottlob the violin, and son Georg Heinrich the flute.

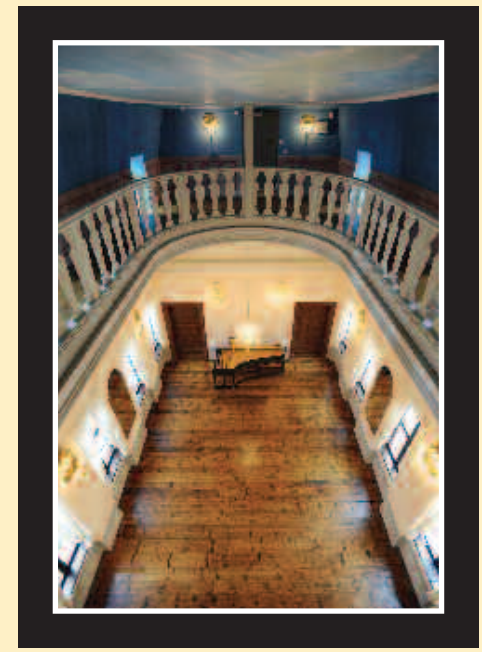


Photo by Gert Meibes

## Art in the Bose House

Like many wealthy citizens of Leipzig, Georg Heinrich Bose owned a valuable collection of engravings and paintings. In 1745 Bose's son-in-law, one of Saxony's most important manufacturers of blue pigment, took over the house and added significantly to the collection, which included a number of works by Rubens, bought at auction in Amsterdam.

**In 1765 it was "open to all art lovers on one afternoon each week for two hours."**



Photo by Wendell Wilson

## Displays of Minerals

Christiana Sibylla Bose's husband Johann Zacharias belonged to the Richter family, famous for their collections of minerals begun in the course of visiting the mining operations which had helped create their wealth. A beautifully illustrated catalogue with hand-coloured engravings of 114 of the 3,000 mineral specimens in the collection was created for the family in 1743. This important monument in the history of mineralogy contains a remarkable illustration of a room with paintings covering the walls and minerals displayed in pyramid-shaped vitrines. This room was in the neighbouring house of Johann Zacharias Richter's brother and is thought to indicate the conventions of displaying art used in the Bose house.