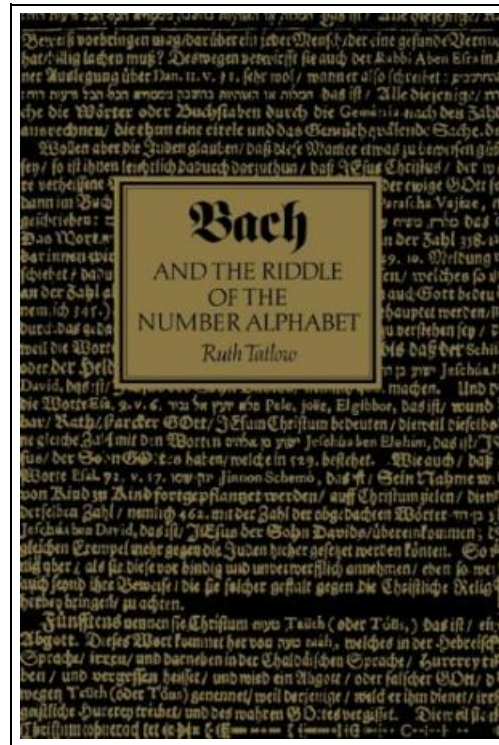# Bach and the Riddle of the Number Alphabet (Paperback)

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BACH AND THE RIDDLE OF THE NUMBER ALPHABET (PAPERBACK)

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, United Kingdom, 2006. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.In 1947 the theologian and musicologist Friedrich Smend published a study which claimed that J. S. Bach regularly employed the natural-order number alphabet (A=1 to Z=24) in his works. Smend provided historical evidence and music examples to support his theory which demonstrated that by this means Bach incorporated significant words into his music, and provided himself with a symbolic compositional scheme. Since then many people have taken up Smend s theory, interpreting numbers of bars and notes in Bach scores according to the natural-order alphabet. By presenting a thorough survey of different number alphabets and their uses in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Germany, Dr Tatlow investigates the plausibility of Smend s claims. Her new evidence fundamentally challenges Smend s conclusions and the book sounds a note of caution to all who continue to use his number-alphabet theory. Dr Tatlow s painstaking research will fascinate all those with an interest in the music of J. S. Bach and German Baroque culture, and will be of particular importance for music historians and analysts.

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