

Season 24 - 25



BACH'S BRANDENBURG CONCERTOS

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2025 | 3 PM
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What's new

See

Ken Wood at Houska Gallery

From May 26–July 7, Houska Gallery will feature the work of St. Louis artist and educator Ken Wood, whose printmaking practice explores the fundamentals of art and design. Wood's most recent works explore "the relationship of shape to shape and color to color using large simple gestures." The artist has previously shown work at The Print Center.



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A. DENNIS SPARGER, MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR



A. Dennis Sparger, Music Director and Conductor, was critically acclaimed as "a conductor equipped with insight as well as craftsmanship" already in his second season. In the past three and a half decades, he has received even more praise for his musical leadership with The Bach Society Chorus and Orchestra. To date, he has conducted them in more than 200 performances of major works by Bach and other composers.

Under his leadership, The Bach Society was presented with the Excellence in the Arts award by the Arts & Education Council of Greater St. Louis, the first chorus to be so honored. Dr. Sparger's leadership was also a driving force in the Christmas Candlelight Concerts being hailed by BBC Music magazine as "one of the top 20 live Christmas events in North America."

In 1989, he introduced a Young Artists scholarship program for singers under 30 to cultivate future soloists. To date, over 70 young singers have been assisted by this program. He also established a professional core of paid Principal Singers, providing employment opportunities for singers with additional vocal training.

He was awarded a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral conducting by the University of Illinois and earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Eastern Illinois University, where he was named one of the 50 Outstanding Graduate Alumni of the Graduate School. In 2013, in recognition of his work with The Bach Society, he was presented with the Lifetime Achievement award by the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Dr. Sparger has also received awards from St. Louis Cathedral Concerts, the St. Louis chapter of the American Guild of Organists and the Illinois chapter of the American Choral Directors Association.

Dr. Sparger is a member of the American Bach Society, American Choral Directors Association, Chorus America, the National Society of Arts & Letters and is a past board member of Artist Presentation Society.



STEPHEN EROS, ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Stephen Eros is a conductor, organist, pianist and teacher who has built a career in the St. Louis area encompassing the traditions of Western classical, American musical theatre, and jazz music. Stephen completed a Master of Arts in Choral

Conducting and Bachelor of Music in Organ Performance at Webster University. In addition to his primary studies with William Partridge and Trent Patterson, he studied voice with Robert Ayllón, jazz piano with Carolbeth True and collaborative piano with Joe Neske.

Stephen has been the Assistant Conductor of The Bach Society of Saint Louis since 2013, and he has worked in the field of sacred music for nearly two decades. He is the Director of Liturgy and Music at St. Clare of Assisi Catholic Church in O'Fallon, IL. There, he is responsible for the formation and training of over 400 volunteers, and he leads nearly 100 volunteer singers in the parish choir and two children's choirs in a robust, diverse repertoire. On the diocesan level, he has served as organist and choirmaster for pontifical liturgies at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Belleville and regularly assists the Chancery and Office of Worship with liturgies throughout the diocese.

As a collaborative pianist, he has worked with some of the finest companies in St. Louis, including The Muny, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis and Union Avenue Opera and serves on the collaborative piano faculty at Webster University.

Stephen is a lifelong resident of Belleville, IL. He resides with his wife and children in his grandparents' former home, next door to his favorite neighbors, his parents.



SANDRA GEARY, PIANIST

Sandra Geary is a native of County Cork, Ireland and has received piano performance diplomas from the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity College, London; the Cork School of Music, Ireland and a Bachelor of Music degree from the St. Louis Conservatory of Music. Her teachers have included

John O'Connor, Joseph Kalichstein and Carole Tafoya. On the piano faculty of Washington University, Sandra also accompanies the WU Chamber and Concert choirs.

She has been The Bach Society of Saint Louis' accompanist since 1993 and is the accompanist for Webster University Opera Studio. She is a vocal coach for the OTSL Artist-in-Training program and Union Avenue Opera's 'Crescendo' Young Artist program. She has collaborated in Voice Masterclasses given by Nathan Gunn, Stanford Olsen, Kevin Short, Erie Mills, Christine Brewer, Mary Ann McCormack and Jennifer Johnson Cano.

Sandra regularly accompanies recitals, auditions and competitions in the St. Louis area.

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Our concerts are professionally recorded, please do your best to minimize excess noise. You will know it's time to applaud when the conductor lowers their arms after the final chord of a piece. This may not happen after every piece. Some songs are grouped together to create an emotional experience.

Thank you and enjoy the concert.

THE BACH SOCIETY OF SAINT LOUIS
A. DENNIS SPARGER, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

Three light gray, wavy, horizontal lines that sweep across the upper portion of the page, creating a sense of movement and design.

J.S. BACH
THE BRANDENBURG
CONCERTOS

THE BACH SOCIETY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
LENORA-MARYA ANOP, CONCERTMASTER AND LEADER

PRESENTED BY
TAD AND CATHERINE EDWARDS

SPONSORED IN PART BY
STEVE AND JANICE SEELE

3:00 P.M.
SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2025

SALEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

PROGRAM

*THE AIM AND FINAL END OF ALL MUSIC SHOULD BE NONE OTHER THAN
THE GLORY OF GOD AND REFRESHMENT OF THE SOUL.*

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Concerto No. 2. BWV 1047, in F Major

Lenora-Marya Anop, violin
Eileen Burke, oboe

Catherine Edwards, flute
David Sanderson, trumpet

- I. (No tempo indication)
- II. Andante
- III. Allegro assai

Concerto No. 6. BWV 1051, in B flat Major

Chris Tantillo and Amy Greenhalgh, viola

- I. (No tempo indication)
- II. Adagio ma non tanto
- III. Allegro

Concerto No. 1. BWV 1046, in F Major

Lenora-Marya Anop, violino piccolo Victoria Knudtson and Blaine Dodson, horn
Eileen Burke, Mark Pye, Jesi Hempstead, oboe

- I. (No tempo indication)
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro
- IV. Minuet – Trio – Minuet – Polonaise – Minuet – Trio – Minuet

————— INTERMISSION —————



Concerto No. 5. BWV 1050, in D Major

Catherine Edwards, flute Lenora-Marya Anop, violin
Charles Metz, harpsichord

- I. Allegro
- II. Affettuoso
- III. Allegro

Concerto No.4. BWV 1049, in G Major

Catherine Edwards and Paula Bernhardt, flute
Lenora-Marya Anop, violin

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Presto

Concerto No. 3. BWV 1048, in G Major

- I. (No tempo indication)
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro assai

THE BRANDENBURG CONCERTOS

PROGRAM NOTES

In the month before he began his highly respected position as Kapellmeister in Anhalt-Cöthen (1717-1723), Sebastian Bach spent a month in jail for presuming he could leave his post at Weimar without permission. Four years later Prince Leopold's new bride, who had little interest in music, used her influence to make reductions in the music budget, thereby decreasing Bach's ability to thrive. But in the years between these two low spots, Bach enjoyed the most supportive and rewarding period of his life.

Prince Leopold highly regarded his composer and provided ample opportunity for Bach to blossom. "The prince was not only a generous patron," writes scholar David Schulenberg, "but was genuinely knowledgeable about music, playing violin and viola da gamba in a tradition of European sovereigns who attained near-professional capability as musicians." An orchestra of about sixteen exceptional players was maintained at the Red Palace in addition to a handful of servants and town musicians who could be called upon when needed to augment these forces. Regular performances of chamber music were held in the palace's Hall of Mirrors for the royal family or visiting guests, or for just the Prince's personal pleasure. And Bach was the shining jewel in his crown.

In addition to providing new music for the Prince, Bach accompanied him on trips throughout Germany where his fame as a virtuoso organist and harpsichordist was widely spread. But a more important benefit of these trips was the opportunity for Bach to meet an international assortment of composers and performers, and, like a musical sponge, he soaked up a variety of styles. For example, the Italian concerto style of Vivaldi seeps through in most of his Brandenburg concertos, and the French style, with its contrasting dances, is prevalent in the First.

During the Prince's journey to Berlin in the spring of 1719, Bach met Christian Ludwig, Margrave of Brandenburg. After hearing him play, the Margrave requested Bach to send him some of his compositions. Two years later, Bach sent him the score and parts to six concertos together with a dedication to the Margrave in French, all enclosed in a green leather folder. Ironically, the Margrave's orchestra consisted of only six players; the folder was never opened!

These six concertos that bear the Margrave's title were composed between 1718 and 1721, and "stand alongside Bach's unaccompanied works for violin and cello and part 1 of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* at the zenith of his Cöthen period." Bach scholar Peter Wollny continues, asserting, "they also form a towering milestone in the history of the instrumental concerto." Each of these works can be described as a *concerto grosso*, meaning a group of soloists, called the *concertino*, is pitted against a larger ensemble, the *tutti*. Perhaps written as a vehicle to highlight some of the finest players in his orchestra at Cöthen, each Brandenburg Concerto is quite unique in style and features different solo instruments. And while the Margrave of Brandenburg never heard them, Bach surely made good use of them in Cöthen. A decade later, when Bach was engaged as director of the *collegium musicum* in Leipzig, it's quite likely they were heard at the renowned Zimmerman's Coffee House as well. But in the years that followed they remained virtually unknown until 1850, when they were published to commemorate the centenary of Bach's death.

While all the concertos can be dated, there is no indication that Bach ever intended them to be performed in chronological order, much less by the numbering system devised for his music a century later. It's just as unlikely that Bach ever imagined performing them all in a single afternoon! Accordingly, they are presented today in an order that I believe will please the listener, fully expecting that a different order might provide an equally satisfying encounter. Each work is its own delight and, together, they provide a unique and refreshing listening experience.

2. BWV 1047, F Major

Composed in 1718, this concerto features trumpet, flute, oboe and violin as the *concertino*, or solo group. Hans-Joachim Schulz suggests that this unique combination arose from Bach's "love of experimentation." And while all four instruments are in about the same range, their tonal colors are quite distinct. After the opening main theme, we hear solo violin, violin and oboe, oboe and flute, and flute and trumpet, with each passage separated by short reflections of the opening theme by the *tutti*. In the second movement, the trumpet and strings are silent, and a simple but contemplative two-bar motif is passed among the remaining soloists and continuo. The trumpet returns in the lively third movement, presenting the subject of a fugue which is followed by oboe, violin, and flute, and at long last joined by the *tutti* in bar 47.

6. BWV 1051, Bb Major

Also composed in 1718, this concerto is completely unique from the fuller-sounding No. 2 and is considered by many to be the oldest of the set. The *concertino* consists of only two violas. (Bach played the viola in many performances of his music and uses this opportunity to introduce it as a solo instrument.) They are accompanied by two violas da gamba, the instrument played by the Prince, plus the continuo. (In our performance we use two cellos.) Like the concertos of Vivaldi, the opening movement is based on a repeated passage, or *ritornello*. The second movement has been described as a "lovely, if somewhat quaint, meditation for violas and cello." The work closes with a lively dance in 12/8 time in which the violas frequently trade parts.

1. BWV 1046, F Major

Concerto No. 1, composed in 1721, calls for the largest number of players. In addition to the strings and continuo, the soloists include three oboes, a pair of hunting horns, and a rarely-used *violino piccolo* which is smaller and tuned a minor third higher than the traditional violin. Instead of the traditional three movements, this concerto has four movements and is more like a French suite. Peter Gutmann describes the opening movement as "four minutes of pure jaunty swaggering infectious elation," an obvious reference to the addition of the horns. While the horns are silent in the slow movement, typically with reduced forces, all the other instruments play. The horns return for a rollicking third movement which highlights the virtuosity of the *violino piccolo*. But it's the fourth movement that really sets this concerto apart with its four dances. The opening minuet for all the players alternates with a trio for oboes and bassoon, a *Polacca* for strings, and a second trio for horns and oboes.

5. BWV 1050, D Major

Described as "the most forward-looking 'Brandenburg'" by Musicologist Adélaïde de Place, Concerto 5 was written between 1720-21, and "chronologically is probably the latest of the six." In addition to flute and violin, the *concertino* also includes the harpsichord. And while the harpsichord was well known as a solo instrument or continuo instrument, its solo position in a concerto is quite new. In fact, the "capriccio-like" cadenza at the end of the first movement has made this work an important part of the keyboard concerto repertoire. While Bach generally led his ensemble while playing the viola, he surely must have intended this virtuosic harpsichord for himself. The reflective second movement is scored for only the three solo instruments and abounds in canonic writing. The third movement, marked Allegro, is more like a *gigue* or fast dance; it begins with violin alone, adds flute and finally harpsichord. The *tutti* does not appear until bar 29 and it is quite rollicking to the end!

4. BWV 1049, G Major

The *concertino* for Concerto 4, composed in 1719-20, is for two recorders (we use flutes) and violin. It begins with a *ritornello* movement featuring a dialogue between the two flutes and violin. The slow movement is described by John Butt as introducing "a new concept of the concerto: here there is a close dialog between the solo group and the orchestra in which the contrast is highlighted by dynamics rather than material." The final movement is a *ritornello* and a *fugue*! It is also a tour de force for the violin; the part is described as being more difficult than Bach's violin concertos. In fact, this virtuosity in the violin part, according to Butt, is "something which by its very nature turns a fugue-brilliant enough on its own terms—into a dazzling concerto movement."

3. BWV 1048, G Major

Our program closes with the shortest of the Six, composed in 1718. It is certainly one of the most familiar. Rather than the expected *concertino-tutti* dialogue, Bach selects three groups of three instruments each--violins, violas, and cellos (plus the continuo), resulting in a rich palette of sound. The work opens with an energetic statement of the *ritornello* theme by all the players before the quick exchanges between the three groups. The third movement is in binary form with each section repeated; it, too, is lively and full of virtuosic playing. But in between these two is a mystery! The second movement consists of only two chords. What was Bach thinking? An improvised cadenza by the violin? By the harpsichord? An insertion from another work? We'll never know for sure.

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LENORA-MARYA ANOP

CONCERTMASTER AND LEADER



Violinist Lenora-Marya Anop is "ravishing...with [her] lean yet intense...violin particularly capturing the spirit of [the] music" (San Francisco Chronicle); "a highly skilled and invested violinist, who brought a lovely singing tone to her playing...top-notch performance(s)...meltingly sensitive" (St. Louis Post-Dispatch). She "played with balance and sympathy...[and] achieved a fine, lyric intensity" (Cleveland Plain Dealer).

Dr. Anop enjoys a busy career as a pedagogue, soloist, chamber musician, concertmaster and orchestra leader. In April 2025, she celebrates her 25th year as the Concertmaster of The Bach Society of Saint Louis Orchestra! She is also the Concertmaster of the Salem Chamber Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis.

Noteworthy projects include her recording entitled "Bach Unlocked" following her assembly of a scholarly violin edition of J.S. Bach's *Cello Suites Nos. 1 and 2*. An avid scholarly and historically appropriate artist, she performs equally comfortably on Baroque, Classical and modern instruments. Truthful to Bach's intentions, she performs *Brandenburg Concerto No. 1* in rare fashion: on a period-appropriate *violino piccolo*.

2024-25 performance highlights include multiple solo and chamber music performances in Carnegie Recital Hall (New York) as well as premieres and concerts in Italy as faculty at the InterHarmony International Music Festival.

Previously First Violin of the professionally managed Rackham String Quartet (RSQ), she performed throughout the United States, Europe and Australia winning five national and international chamber music competitions. "The Strad" magazine labeled the RSQ "a force to be reckoned with".

Dr. Anop began her violin studies at age three in Denver, Colorado. She was one of the first Suzuki violin students in the United States under the tutelage of a violinist trained by the legendary Suzuki pioneer John Kendall who, at that time, was the violin professor at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE). Lenora's musical life came full circle in 1997 when she was appointed to SIUE's music faculty, where she is Professor of Violin and Director of Strings. A passionate, dedicated and accomplished pedagogue, Lenora's talented and capable students have been appointed to teaching and orchestral positions worldwide. Dr. Anop teaches many students, grand-students and great grand-students, as her former students send her the next generation, knowing that they will have an exceptionally dedicated mentor.

Dr. Anop earned her Bachelor of Music with honors in performance from the New England Conservatory, Master of Music from Yale University and Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Michigan.

CHARLES METZ

HARPSICHORD



Charles Metz studied piano at Penn State University, beginning his harpsichord studies through private lessons with the legendary Igor Kipnis. In the process of earning a Ph.D. in Historical Performance Practice at Washington University in Saint Louis Missouri, he studied with Trevor Pinnock. More recently, Dr. Metz has worked with Webb Wiggins and Lisa Crawford at the Oberlin Conservatory. He has performed across the country with concerts in Chicago, IL; Saratoga, NY; Bennington, VT; Louisville, KY; and Liberty, MO in their Baroque music JEMS Fest.

He has performed solo recitals at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., Oberlin Conservatory, and appeared as guest artist in Kansas City for the KC

Symphony's summer program "Summerfest". With the Chamber Music Society of St. Louis, he was the featured keyboard soloist in Bach's *Fifth Brandenburg Concerto* under conductor Nicholas McGegan. He has appeared with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Ars Antigua Chicago and the Newberry Consort of Chicago. Recently he has played with the Desert Baroque in Palm Desert California and did performances including master classes at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and Penn State University in State College, PA.

As an early keyboard specialist, he is currently performing on his historic Italian virginal, harpsichords and fortepianos. Dr. Metz's list of performance credits includes international appearances in the Netherlands, Germany and Costa Rica. Dr. Metz also obtained a doctorate in Optometry and worked for twenty years in his own private practice and Clarkson Eyecare in St. Louis before retiring. In addition to his performing activity, he serves on the Board of Directors of The Chamber Music Society of St. Louis.

KENNETH KULOSA

CELLO



A native of Albuquerque, NM, Kenneth Kulosa moved to St. Louis in 1997 at the invitation of the St. Louis Symphony. Kenneth came to St. Louis from Chicago where he played with the Chicago Symphony, the Grant Park Symphony, and at the same time, held the posts of principal cellist for both the South Bend and Northwest Indiana Symphonies. A graduate of the New England Conservatory and the University of Houston, Kenneth studied with Laurence Lesser and Hans Jorgen Jensen, later becoming Mr. Jensen's assistant at Northwestern University. An active pedagogue as well as performer, Kenneth is in great demand as a private teacher and in 2003 the Missouri Chapter of the American String Teachers Association named him their Artist/Teacher of

the Year. Mr. Kulosa maintains a large private studio of talented cellists and has placed students in virtually every major music school and conservatory in the United States. Currently, he serves as Adjunct Professor of cello at Webster University and Washington University in St. Louis.

A versatile musician, Kenneth is found performing in many realms. Kenneth has appeared throughout the United States as a soloist with the Storioni Ensemble, Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra, the Bataquitos Festival Orchestra, the civic orchestras of Boston and Fort Worth, as well as the orchestras of St. Louis, Santa Fe, Lake Charles, South Bend, Northwest Indiana and Webster University. He is active as a chamber musician throughout the St. Louis area with the Saint Louis Symphony's Community Partnership program, the Pulitzer Foundation and as a member of the Sheldon Concert Hall's education series Classical Connections Trio.

Passionate about period performance, Kenneth is currently a member of the Kingsbury Early Music Ensemble and frequently performs music from the baroque and classical period on baroque cello, *violoncello piccolo* and *viola da gamba*. He has also performed with Early Music St. Louis, Bach at the Sem and has served on the faculty of the Baroque String Academy of the Community Music School at Webster University.

CATHERINE EDWARDS

FLUTE



Catherine Edwards received her Bachelor of Music degrees in both flute and piano performance from Auburn University.

She continued her studies at SIU-Edwardsville, studying piano with Ruth Slenczynska and flute with Janet Scott, subsequently receiving her Master of Music degree in flute performance. From there she went on to study with Jacob Berg at the Saint Louis Conservatory and School of the Arts, where she received a Graduate Diploma.

Catherine performs in the orchestras of The Bach Society of Saint Louis, the American Cantorei and various freelance orchestras and chamber music groups in the Saint Louis area.

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Catherine Edwards
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YOUNG ARTISTS

RITA SCHIEN SOPRANO



Rita Schien, soprano, is excited to return for another season with The Bach Society as a Young Artist. She is currently pursuing a degree in Vocal Performance at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, where she studies with Dr. Leslie Allnatt. At UMSL, Rita performs with the University Singers and Vocal Point and she is actively involved in the Opera Theatre Program. In 2023, she won the Young Artist Concerto Competition at UMSL and earned second place in the Crescendo Program with Union Avenue Opera. Rita was also honored with the prestigious Presser Scholarship Award from UMSL's Music Department in May 2024. Beyond classical music, Rita is deeply engaged with the St. Louis Barbershop Community, serving as a section leader for The Recruits Chorus and for the Acappellooza Summer and Fall Festivals. She is thankful for the opportunities The Bach Society has provided to further her musical growth.

CALISTA GOLDWASSER MEZZO-SOPRANO



Calista Goldwasser, mezzo-soprano, joins The Bach Society of Saint Louis as a Young Artist for its 84th season. She holds a Master of Music from Webster University and a Bachelor of Music from DePauw University. Recently, Calista made debuts in the opera choruses of both Winter Opera of St. Louis (*Die Zauberflöte*, *Anna Bolena*, *Don Giovanni*, *Naughty Marietta*) and Union Avenue Opera (*Carmen*) in addition to performing and stage directing with Webster's Opera Studio. Though opera is her primary passion, she also loves art song and early music, particularly from the French impressionist and baroque movements. In addition to performing, Calista teaches voice lessons with Patterson Performing Arts and is the primary instructor for The Bach Society's own "Finding your Voice" in-school lessons program. Calista looks forward to strengthening her relationship with The Bach Society both as a Young Artist and educator.

YOUNG ARTISTS

KELLY N. BEEKMAN MEZZO-SOPRANO



Kelly N. Beekman, mezzo-soprano, is a St. Louis native and a recent graduate from Webster University. She is honored to have been selected by The Bach Society of Saint Louis to be a part of their Young Artist program for her second consecutive season. She has devoted her life to music and performance, dazzling audiences with her captivating stage presence and astounding voice in many genres, including classical, jazz, musical theater and contemporary pop and rock. She was a recipient of the Christine Brewer Annual Scholarship in Vocal Music Performance. She received departmental honors for her tireless dedication to her craft and her outstanding performance in opera and jazz. She has performed with Union Avenue Opera in the chorus for *Carmen* (2024) and *Eugene Onegin* (2022). She was also in the chorus for *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *Anna Bolena* (2025) and *Ma Lescaut* and *Naughty Marietta* (2024) with Winter Opera St. Louis.

JACK MCFARLING BARITONE



Jack McFarling, baritone, a recent graduate from Truman State University and is excited for his first season as a Young Artist for The Bach Society. After two seasons in the group, he decided to take on a new challenge and pursue this opportunity. Born and raised in St. Louis, Jack has had an interest in music throughout his life. He pursued computer science as well as general music at the collegiate level and has cherished the experience. He was awarded the Vocal Music Service Scholarship, rewarding his hard work and elevating him as a leader in multiple choirs at Truman State. He has received many other awards and honors in the music department, including a feature as a vocal soloist for the December 2021 Inauguration Ceremony. In addition to pursuing music with The Bach Society, Jack jumps at any opportunity to share with the world the music that has enriched his life so greatly.

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