



Bach at New Year's



The Berkshire Bach Ensemble *Eugene Drucker, Director*



Monday | December 30, 2019 | 3 pm

Co-presented with NEPR | New England
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Tuesday | December 31, 2019 | 6 pm

Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center
14 Castle Street | Great Barrington, MA



Wednesday | January 1, 2020 | 3 pm

Co-presented with WMHT
Troy Savings Bank Music Hall
30 Second Street | Troy, NY

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Eugene Drucker | Music Director

The Program

J.S. BACH “Brandenburg” Concerto No. 1 in F Major, BWV 1046
(1685-1750) *Allegro | Adagio | Allegro | Menuet-Trio-Menuet-Polonaise-Menuet-Trio-Menuet*

Michael Roth, *Violin* | Margaret Owens, Gerald Reuter, Jessica Warren, *Oboes* | Neil Mueller, Allan Dean, *Horns* | Stephen Walt, *Bassoon*

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 5 in D Major, BWV 1050
Allegro | Affettuoso | Allegro

Laura Lutzke, *Violin* | Judith Mendenhall, *Flute* | Kenneth Weiss, *Harpichord*

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 3 in G Major, BWV 1048
Allegro | Andante | Adagio from BWV 1038 | *Allegro*

Eugene Drucker, Emily Daggett Smith, Michael Roth, *Violins* | Ronald Gorevic, Lih-Wen Ting, Irena McGuffee, *Violas* | Roberta Cooper, Alistair MacRae, Ronald Feldman, *Cellos*

~ Intermission ~

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 4 in G Major, BWV 1049
Allegro | Andante | Presto

Eugene Drucker, *Violin* | Judith Mendenhall, Alison Chapman-Hale, *Flutes*

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 6 in B-flat Major, BWV 1051
Allegro | Adagio ma non tanto | Allegro

Lih-Wen Ting, Ronald Gorevic, *Violas* | Roberta Cooper, Ronald Feldman, Alistair MacRae, *Cellos*

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 2 in F Major, BWV 1047
Allegro | Andante | Allegro assai

Joel Pitchon, *Violin* | Alison Chapman-Hale, *Flute* | Gerard Reuter, *Oboe* | Sycil Mathai, *Trumpet*

A Note from our Music Director



It is sometimes necessary for performers—and maybe for audiences as well—to reevaluate long-held preconceptions about great works of art. Terrill McDade’s historical program notes, provided below, remind us that Bach didn’t compose the “Brandenburg” Concerti as a set of six. He wrote them over the course of about five years, and then, perhaps as an afterthought, dedicated them to the Margrave of Brandenburg. The challenges of writing *concerti grossi*—taking an Italian model and adapting it to his complex and highly personal style—occupied Bach’s thoughts for an extended period, during which he was undoubtedly involved with many other projects.

These works differ from Bach’s sonatas and partitas for solo violin, his cello suites, and the *Well-Tempered Clavier* in that they were not composed in one sustained burst of inspiration or in fulfillment of a single aesthetic goal (e.g. to explore the potential of an unaccompanied string instrument, or to write a series of preludes and fugues in every major and minor key). Nevertheless, since their rediscovery in the 19th century, they have often been presented as a single concert program.

I’ve played in such programs since my early 20s, both with Berkshire Bach under Kenneth Cooper’s inspired leadership and with other ensembles for years before that. The “Brandenburgs” have formed part of the “background noise” of my musical consciousness for my entire professional life, and I welcome the opportunity to revisit them now as Music Director. I enjoyed the expanded orchestration that Ken developed for the first and third concertos, but in this performance I hew closer to the original scoring, since variety of instrumentation is already built into these works. To frame this rich musical offering, I’ve taken the liberty of adding three short works by other composers: a trumpet duet by Bach’s predecessor, Michael Praetorius; a solo violin fantasia by his friend Telemann; and a New Year’s song by one of the many composers who were inspired by his legacy, Béla Bartók. These additions give you a chance to hear more from some of our outstanding players, and to place Bach’s music, very much a product of its own time, in a broader historical and stylistic context.

—Eugene Drucker

~ *Frohes neues Jahr!* ~

Intrada & Intermezzi

Intrada played before the program | Intermezzi played at the end of the Intermission

M. Praetorius *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ (Praise be to you, Jesus Christ)*
(1571-1621)

Allan Dean, Neil Mueller, *Corni da Caccia*



B. Bartók *New Year's Greeting, No. 29 from 44 Duos for Two Violins,*
(1881-1945) Sz. 98

Jessica Warren, *Oboe* | Emily Daggett Smith, *Violin*

G.P. Telemann *Largo and Allegro from Fantasia No. 1 in B-flat Major,*
(1681-1767) TWV 40:14

Emily Daggett Smith, *Violin*



2019-2020

The Berkshire Bach Ensemble

Eugene Drucker | Music Director & Violin

Laura Lutzke, Joel Pitchon, Michael Roth, Emily Daggett Smith | *Violins*

Ronald Gorevic, Irena McGuffee, Lih-Wen Ting | *Violas*

Roberta Cooper, Ronald Feldman, Alistair MacRae | *Cellos*

Peter Weitzner | *Double Bass*

Alison Chapman-Hale, Judith Mendenhall | *Flutes*

Margaret Owens, Gerard Reuter, Jessica Warren | *Oboes*

Stephen Walt | *Bassoon*

Sycil Mathai | *Trumpet*

Allan Dean, Neil Mueller | *Corni da Caccia*

Kenneth Weiss | *Harpsichord*

EUGENE DRUCKER, DIRECTOR AND VIOLIN 🎵

Eugene Drucker, founding member of the Emerson String Quartet, returns for his third season as Music Director of the *Bach at New Year's* concerts for The Berkshire Bach Society. He has appeared as a solo violinist with the orchestras of Montreal, Brussels, Antwerp, Liege, Hartford, Richmond, Omaha, Jerusalem, and the Rhineland-Palatinate, as well as with the American Symphony Orchestra and Aspen Chamber Symphony. A graduate of Columbia University and the Juilliard School, he served for two years as concertmaster of the Juilliard Orchestra, which featured him several times as a soloist. He made his New York debut as a Concert Artists Guild winner in the fall of 1976, after having won prizes at the Montreal Competition and the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels. He has recorded the complete unaccompanied works of Bach (Parnassus Records), the complete sonatas and duos of Bartók (Biddulph Recordings), and (with the Emerson Quartet) works ranging from Bach and Haydn to contemporary repertoire, mostly for Deutsche Grammophon. A nine-time Grammy and three-time Gramophone Magazine Award winner, he is visiting professor of chamber music at Stony Brook University. In 2008 his original setting of four Shakespeare sonnets was premiered by baritone Andrew Nolen and the Escher String Quartet at Stony Brook. The songs have since appeared as part of the two-CD release *Stony Brook Soundings* by Bridge Recordings. Additional compositions include *Madness and the Death of Ophelia*, based on four scenes from *Hamlet*, and a setting of five poems by Denise Levertov, both for female speaker/singer and string quartet; and *Series of Twelve*, a string quartet commissioned by the New Music for Strings Festival, which premiered in Copenhagen and Reykjavik in August 2018. His novel, *The Savior*, was published by Simon & Schuster in 2007 and appeared in a German translation called *Wintersonate*, published in 2010 by Osburg Verlag in Berlin.

ALISON CHAPMAN-HALE, FLUTE 🎵

Alison Chapman-Hale made her New York debut at Carnegie Recital Hall in 1982 as winner of the Artists International competition and has performed at Lincoln Center, Merkin Hall, CAMI Hall, many of the major churches in New York City, and concert halls throughout the US, Europe, and South America. Solo performances include appearances with the Berkshire Bach Ensemble, New England Piano Quintet, Portland (ME) String Quartet, Portland Symphony Orchestra, and at the National Flute Association convention. In 2012 she was inducted into the Fryeburg (ME) Academy Hall of Excellence.

She has been a member of the Portland Symphony Orchestra since 1985, Opera Maine, and Portland Ballet Orchestras, in addition to the Berkshire Bach Ensemble. Other honors include the Kandell Fellowship for participation in the Tanglewood Institute, where she was awarded the C.D. Jackson Master prize. Currently on the faculties of Mt. Holyoke and Bennington, she has taught previously at Amherst, Bowdoin, and Bates Colleges. She holds Master and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from Manhattan School of Music, as well as an undergraduate degree from Mt. Holyoke College, where she received the prestigious Mary Lyon award for outstanding alumnae.

ROBERTA COOPER, CELLO 🎵

Cellist Roberta Cooper is a winner of the Artists International Competition and a founding member of the Walsh-Drucker-Cooper Trio that has performed extensively in major series in New York City, Washington, DC, New Orleans, and Europe. She is the assistant principal cellist of the American Symphony Orchestra, the American Composers Orchestra, and the Westchester Philharmonic. She has performed with the Berlin Philharmonic, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, the New York City Opera, and the ballet orchestras of both the New York City Ballet and American Ballet Theatre, and has toured as guest cellist with the Emerson Quartet in the United States and abroad. She received her undergraduate and graduate music degrees from the Juilliard School, where she studied with Lorne Munroe and Harvey Shapiro. She has been a member of the Berkshire Bach Ensemble for more than 25 years.

ALLAN DEAN, CORNO DA CACCIA 🎵

Allan Dean is Professor of Trumpet Emeritus at the Yale School of Music and a member of St. Louis Brass. He is an instructor in the Community Music Program at Simon's Rock and has been a member of the Berkshire Bach Society Ensemble since the early 1990s. He performed with the New York Brass Quintet for eighteen years and the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble for ten years while active on the New York concert scene and in the recording studio. In 1982 he joined the faculty at Indiana University and later joined the faculty at the Yale School of Music. As a founding member of Calliope: A Renaissance Band and the New York Cornet and Sacbut Ensemble, he is dedicated to performing Baroque and Renaissance music on original instruments. He performs and teaches each summer at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival in Norfolk, CT, and can be heard playing both modern trumpet and early brass on over eighty recordings for major record labels.

RONALD FELDMAN, CELLO 🎵

American cellist Ronald Feldman has achieved critical acclaim both as a conductor and a performer. He is a two-time winner of the American Symphony League's ASCAP Award and has appeared as a guest conductor with such orchestras as the London Symphony and the Saint Louis Symphony. He joined the Boston Symphony at the age of 19 and has appeared as a soloist performing repertoire from Dvorak to Ligeti. Chamber music affiliations have included performances with the Boston Symphony Chamber Players and Collage New Music Ensemble, and his collaborators include pianists Emmanuel Ax and Garrick Ohlsson, violinist Gil Shaham, and cellist Yo Ma. He is currently a member of the Williams Chamber Players and the Berkshire Chamber Players, Artist in Residence and Lecturer in Music at Williams College, and Director of both the Longwood and Berkshire Symphony Orchestras.

RONALD GOREVIC, VIOLA 🎵

Ronald Gorevic was born in London and has had an active career as a performer and teacher on both the viola and the violin. He is a founding member of the ensemble Prometheus, with which he has recorded the piano quartets of Saint-Saens and D'Indy for the Centaur label. Also for Centaur, he recorded the Brahms clarinet quintet and trio in the composer's own arrangement for viola instead of clarinet. In addition to his work for Centaur, he has recorded for Koch International and Crystal records. He recently formed the Revere Piano Quartet with other faculty members from the New England Conservatory of Music. Later this season he will perform the complete Beethoven violin sonatas at Simon's Rock and the complete Bach cello suites, transcribed for viola, at Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He is currently on the faculties of Smith College, the New England Conservatory Preparatory School, and Simon's Rock.

LAURA LUTZKE, VIOLIN 🎵

Laura Lutzke earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees from The Juilliard School and a Master of Music with Distinction from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. She is an avid chamber musician, and was named one of the "Rising Stars" at the Caramoor International Music Festival, collaborating with artists such as Atar Arad, Pamela Frank, and Arnold Steinhardt. She has taught and performed at the Bowdoin International Music Festival alongside musicians such as Frank Huang, Mikhail Kopelman, Kurt Muroki, and Paul Neubauer. Since 2006 she has participated in festivals

throughout the US, Europe, the UK, and Asia, including Open Chamber Music at Prussia Cove in Cornwall, England. She collaborates regularly with diverse artists and ensembles such as Alarm Will Sound, Björk, Le Cercle de l'Harmonie, Gabriel Kahane, Johann Johannsson, The Knights, Max Richter, Orchestra of St. Luke's, Paul McCartney, The National, Stars of the Lid, Roomful of Teeth, Wordless Music Orchestra, and Yann Tiersen. She is currently a member of the critically-acclaimed American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME) and Co-Leader of Le Cercle de L'Harmonie classical orchestra in France.

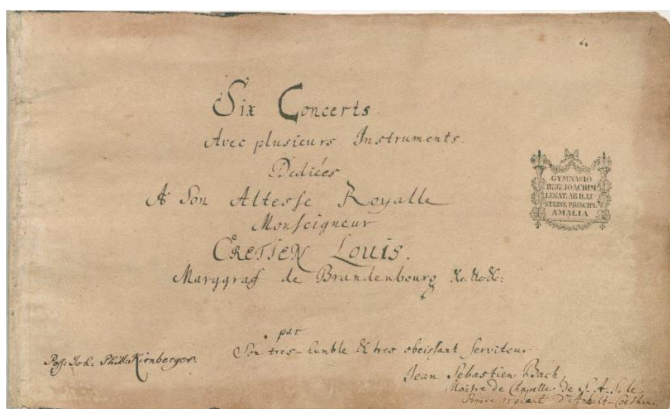
ALISTAIR MACRAE, CELLO 🎵

Alistair MacRae has appeared as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral principal throughout North America, Europe, Asia, South America, and the Middle East. His playing has been praised for its "rich sound and lyrical phrasing" (*Palm Beach Daily News*) and his performances have been featured in radio broadcasts across the United States on WQXR, WWFM, WDAV, WCQS, KING FM, and Vermont Public Radio. He is Cordelia Wikarski-Miedel Artist in Residence at the University of Puget Sound, and the cellist of the Puget Sound Piano Trio, and principal cello of both the Princeton Symphony Orchestra and Symphony Tacoma. He also performs with his wife, soprano Alison Pohl, in the voice and cello duo Soprello and is a member of the Artist Faculty at the Brevard Music Center. His past projects include chamber music and recitals in venues such as Carnegie Hall's Zankel and Weill Halls, Seattle's Benaroya Hall, and Palm Beach's Kravis Center for the Performing Arts; recordings of chamber music by Kodaly and Telemann; premiere performances of 21st-century pieces at Princeton, Yale, Columbia, and Harvard Universities; and ensemble albums of music by Mozart and Scott Joplin.

SYCIL MATHAI, TRUMPET 🎵

Sycil Mathai enjoys a global music career that encompasses all genres. The *New York Times* called him a "terrific trumpeter." From classical to experimental, his work includes performances with ensembles from The Knights, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke's, Argento New Music, David Sanford and the Pittsburgh Collective, American Composers Orchestra, artist Carter Burwell, the dance companies of Merce Cunningham and Mark Morris, and movie directors Andy Kaufman and the Coen Brothers. He has recorded for RCA, PBS, CBS, EA Sports, Warner Classics, and Sirius Satellite Radio and has shared the stage with artists

ranging from Yo-Yo Ma to Stevie Wonder. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School (as a student of Mark Gould) and Texas Christian University (as a student of Steve Weger). During 2019 he recorded with Gil Shaham, performed at the Ravinia and Tanglewood music festivals, and joined the Meridian Arts Ensemble. He is currently on the faculty at the State University of New York at Fredonia. This is his second appearance with the Berkshire Bach Society.



M.S. Cover Page of J.S. Bach, Six Concerts avec plusieurs instruments dedicated to Christian Ludwig, Margrave of Brandenburg

IRENA MCGUFFEE, VIOLA 🎵

Irena McGuffee is a long-time Berkshire Bach Ensemble member who has received numerous awards and distinctions throughout her career, including the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) chamber music award for the state of Florida and the Boca Pops Scholarship Competition. She has performed under many prominent conductors, including Leonard Slatkin, Pierre Boulez, Gunther Schuller, Charles Dutoit, and Kurt Masur. She received her undergraduate degree *summa cum laude* from the Harid Conservatory in Boca Raton (FL), and her graduate degree from the Manhattan School of Music. She performs chamber music regularly with the New England Symphonic Ensemble, Distinguished Concerts International New York, the Mark Morris Music Ensemble, and the Berkshire Bach Ensemble. In addition, she has performed on Broadway in the musical *Matilda*.

JUDITH MENDENHALL, FLUTE 🎵

Judith Mendenhall has appeared throughout the US, Europe, and Asia as a recital, chamber, and orchestral musician. She is principal flutist of the American Ballet Theatre Orchestra, and performs regularly with the Cleveland, Mendelssohn, and Emerson String Quartets and Musicians from Marlboro. Her solo recitals include appearances at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the 92nd Street Y, and the National Chiang Kai-Shek Cultural Center in Taipei. She has been principal flutist with the New York Chamber Symphony, the Mostly Mozart Festival, the Grand Teton Festival, and the Colorado Music Festival, and was a founding member of the Music Today Ensemble and Aulos Wind Quintet. She received the 2016 Distinguished Teaching Award from The New School, where as a faculty member of the Mannes School of Music, she chairs the wind department. She is also on the faculty of Queens College of the City University of New York. In addition, she performs in summer festivals including the Interlochen Flute Institute and the Aria International Summer Academy, and the biennial recital-master class tours of Taiwan.

NEIL MUELLER, CORNO DA CACCIA 🎵

Neil Mueller enjoys a career performing and teaching music. He is Associate Professor of Trumpet at Central Michigan University, Principal Trumpet of the Lansing Symphony Orchestra and Cleveland's BlueWater Chamber Orchestra, and third trumpet in the Grand Rapids Symphony. He has toured the US and Italy with the Brass Ring quintet and recorded new works by Pulitzer Prize-winning composers Jacob Druckman, David del Tredici, and Joseph Schwanter. In addition, he has performed concerti with the Boston Pops, the Eastern Connecticut Symphony, Fargo-Moorhead Symphony, as well as the Berkshire Bach Ensemble. He has recorded extensively as both a soloist and chamber musician and has published several popular pedagogical works for the trumpet. He recently released the CD *Call and Response*, featuring new works for trumpet and piano and trumpet duo with fellow Berkshire Bach Ensemble member Allan Dean and pianist Zhihua Tang.

MARGARET OWENS, OBOE 🎵

Margaret Owens is in demand for her performances on historical oboes and has appeared with many of North America's baroque orchestras, including American Bach Soloists, Apollo's Fire, Folger Consort, Handel and Haydn Society, National Cathedral Baroque Orchestra, Tafelmusik, Washington Bach Consort, and others. She is a member of the chamber group REBEL and

a founding member of Kleine Kammermusik, whose debut album *Fanfare and Filigree: Chamber Music from Paris to Dresden* (2017) received critical acclaim. She participates in many summer music festivals, including the Charlotte Bach Festival, the Staunton Music Festival, and the Amherst Early Music Festival, and holds degrees in oboe performance from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, the Manhattan School of Music, and the City University of New York. She is on the faculty of the Jacob School of Music at Indiana University, the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University, and the Amherst Early Music Festival. In her teaching she focuses on broadening the study of historical oboes, from technique to 18th-century performance practice. An eastern North Carolina native, she lives in Northern Virginia with her husband, a music historian, and her son, a computer enthusiast.

JOEL PITCHON 🎵

Joel Pitchon is a soloist, concertmaster, chamber music player, and Professor of Music at Smith College in Northampton (MA). A frequent Berkshire Bach performer, he earned degrees from The Juilliard School of Music, where he studied violin with Oscar Shumsky and Joseph Fuchs. He has served as concertmaster for numerous orchestras, including the Orquestra Ciutat de Barcelona (Spain), the New York Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, and the EOS Chamber Orchestra. The *New York Times* noted his playing in the EOS production of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* as "superb." For Gasparo Records he recorded a CD of four sonatas for violin and piano by Clifton J. Noble, Jr., with the composer as pianist, and *New England Legacy*, works by Quincy Porter, Walter Piston, and Amy Beach with pianist Jonathan Bass. For ARTCD he performed with the Walden Chamber Players on *Sun Threads*, a premiere recording of the chamber music of Augusta Read Thomas. He is currently co-director of the Sage Chamber Music Society at Smith College and a member of the Elm Chamber Ensemble.

GERARD REUTER, OBOE 🎵

Gerard Reuter is a dedicated chamber musician and a past recipient of the prestigious Pro Musicis International Award. He studied oboe at the Juilliard School from the age of nine and later attended the Royal College of Music in London. He has appeared as a soloist with Jupiter Symphony, Philharmonia Virtuosi, Riverside Symphony and Orchestra of the Bronx, the National Chamber Orchestra, the Soviet Emigré Orchestra, and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, among others. A founding member of both the Orpheus Chamber

Orchestra and An die Musik, he is a long-time member of the Dorian Wind Quintet and has performed with many ensembles in the United States and abroad, occasionally as a guest conductor. He has recorded for Sony, New World, Telarc, Columbia, BMG-Catalyst, Dorian, Summit, and Musical Heritage Society.

MICHAEL ROTH, VIOLIN 🎻

Michael Roth, a native of Scarsdale, NY, received his early musical training with Frances Magnes at the Hoff-Barthelsson Music School. He is a graduate of both Oberlin College and Conservatory and the University of Massachusetts, where he was the recipient of the Julian Olevsky Award. He is currently associate concertmaster of the New York City Ballet Orchestra, a member of the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, and principal 2nd violin of the Westchester Philharmonic, the American Composers Orchestra, and the New York Pops. He has served as concertmaster of the Princeton Symphony, the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, the Greenwich Symphony Orchestra, and for many years was concertmaster of the Vermont Mozart Festival Orchestra. As a chamber musician, he regularly participates in the Central Vermont Chamber Music and the Windham Chamber Music Festivals, and he plays frequently with the Sherman Chamber Ensemble, the New York Chamber Ensemble, and the Saratoga Chamber Players.

EMILY DAGGETT SMITH, VIOLIN 🎻

Emily Daggett Smith has been praised for the quality of her playing and has performed across the United States, Europe, South America, and Asia. She made her New York concerto debut as a soloist with the Juilliard Orchestra in Alice Tully Hall and has since performed with many groups, including Iris Orchestra, the Festival Mozaic Orchestra, and the New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra. She has appeared as a recitalist in such venues as the Kennedy Center and Chicago's Music in the Loft and as a chamber musician with members of the Cleveland, Emerson and Juilliard String Quartets. She is on the faculty at the Bard College Conservatory Pre-College program and the Juilliard School. She holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Juilliard and a Doctor of Musical Arts from Stony Brook University. She studied with Soovin Kim, Philip Setzer, Joel Smirnoff, Laurie Smukler and Donald Weilerstein. She plays on a Johannes Cuypers violin, generously donated by Dr. Marylou Witz.

LIUH-WEN TING, VIOLA 🎵

Liu-Wen Ting is a multi-faceted musician, member of the award-winning Meridian String Quartet, and co-founder of Ensemble Meme. She has collaborated with artists from the Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society to the Manhattan String Quartet, Cassatt Quartet, and the Persian vocal duo Shahram and Hafez Nazeri, with whom she has worked for eleven years. A proponent of contemporary music, she is on the staff of the Composers Conference and Chamber Music Center and has premiered and recorded solo and chamber works for labels including Naxos, Atlantic, Mode, Capstone, Albany, and others. She has performed in music festivals including Ostrava New Music Days, Prague Spring Music Festival, Warsaw Autumn Music Festival, Primavera en la Habana, and the international electro-acoustic music festival in Cuba. She has been a member of the Orchestras of St. Luke's and the Berkshire Bach Ensemble for over two decades.

STEPHEN WALT, BASSOON 🎵

Stephen Walt is one of the original Berkshire Bach Ensemble members, playing in every *Bach at New Year's* concert since inception. He retired recently as principal bassoonist of the Albany Symphony Orchestra, after 37 years, and as Senior Lecturer at the University of Massachusetts, where he taught for two decades. He is currently Artist-Associate in Bassoon and Director of Woodwind Chamber Music at Williams College and on the faculty of the Chamber Music Conference of the East. He has performed with orchestras, opera companies, and chamber ensembles throughout the United States and overseas, including the Borromeo, Lark, Muir, Amernet, and Shanghai String Quartets, and has been a guest artist at the Monadnock Festival, Musicorda, Music Festival of the Hamptons, and Music from Greer in Arizona. His primary teachers were his father, Sherman Walt, the eminent former principal bassoonist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Arthur Weisberg. He has recorded for Naxos, CRI, Decca, Koch International, Gasparo, Nonesuch, and Albany Records. He plays a 1958 Heckel bassoon known as "The Brussels," which was made for his father and exhibited at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair as an example of fine German artisanship.

JESSICA WARREN, OBOE 🎵

Jessica Warren is a freelance oboist on the East Coast, performing with such ensembles as the National Symphony Orchestra, Richmond Symphony, Eclipse Chamber Orchestra, Wintergreen Festival Orchestra, Louisiana

Philharmonic Orchestra, Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra, and Portland Symphony Orchestra. In 2017 and 2018, she performed as an oboe fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. As a teacher, she has worked with advanced high school and college oboists at the Interlochen Center for the Arts, New England Conservatory Preparatory School, and as an Associate Instructor at Indiana University, in addition to frequent guest teaching and masterclasses at the college level. She is a gouging machine repair specialist for Harvard Double Reeds and currently serves as the News of Interest Coordinator for *The Double Reed*, the journal of the International Double Reed Society. She studied primarily with John Ferrillo, Linda Strommen, and Robert Sorton, and currently lives, performs, and teaches in Washington, DC.

KENNETH WEISS, HARPSICHORD ♪

Kenneth Weiss has an active career as a soloist, conductor, chamber musician, and teacher. He has performed extensively in Europe, North America, and Asia, including at Wigmore Hall, Tokyo's Bunkakaikan Hall, Théâtre de la Ville in Paris, the Library of Congress, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, La Roque d'Anthéron, Auditorio Nacional in Madrid, and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. He is a frequent guest of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, and NYC's Music Before 1800. Highlights of the 2019-20 season include the "Brandenburg" Concerti with the Orchestre de Rouen and the Berkshire Bach Society, Tallis and Scarlatti at Emerald City Music Seattle, a live recording of Rebel's *Eléments* on the historic Taskin harpsichord in Lisbon, and the *Art of Fugue* with Phantasm in the Lausanne Bach Festival. His recordings for Satirino records have been widely acclaimed and include Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, Partitas, and the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Rameau opera and ballet transcriptions, two Scarlatti albums, and two CDs devoted to Elizabethan keyboard music—*A Cleare Day* and *Heaven & Earth*. A native New Yorker, he attended the High School of Performing Arts and the Oberlin Conservatory, where he studied with Lisa Goode Crawford before working with legendary harpsichordist Gustav Leonhardt at the Amsterdam Conservatory. He is professor of harpsichord at the Haute Ecole de Musique in Geneva, Switzerland, and professor of chamber music at the Paris Conservatory.

PETER WEITZNER, DOUBLE BASS ♪

Peter Weitzner is a graduate of The Juilliard School and has appeared frequently as a soloist and ensemble player with numerous musical groups in

the United States and abroad. As a soloist with the Baltimore Symphony, he performed the New York premiere of Sheila Silver's *Chant for Bass and Piano*, and he has participated frequently at international music festivals. An avid chamber musician, he is currently the curator and host of the BPL Chamber Players in residence at the Brooklyn Public Library and has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Orion, the Enso and Daedalus Quartets, Trio Solisti, New York Chamber Ensemble, Yale at Norfolk, and many others. For ten years he toured internationally with the Giora Feidman Trio and in 2009 was invited to become a member of the Quincy Jones Musiq Consortium, an arts education advocacy group comprised of arts-related non-profits, musicians, and educators. He has an extensive discography and is a frequent contributor to NPR's *Performance Today*, hosted by Fred Child.

The Harpsichord ♪

The harpsichord used in today's performance is a new instrument recently finished by Peter Fisk of Mystic (CT), based on the 17th-century Flemish double manual instruments that were in common use when the "Brandenburg" Concerti were first performed. The instrument is prepared and maintained by Glenn Giuttari of the Harpsichord Clearing House, the largest provider of early keyboards in the US, providing harpsichords and continuo organs, restoration, and brokerage since 1969.

The Music



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750) was born in Eisenach to a respected family of musicians. He was well-educated in performance and composition, first by his father and, after his father's death, by his elder brother, who was a student of Pachelbel. Part of his education was copying the scores of other composers, which exposed him to a wide range of styles and developed his encyclopedic interest in all types of music. Over his life, Bach served as organist at Arnstadt (1703-1707) and Mühlhausen (1707-1708), court organist and Concertmaster in Weimar (1708-1717), Music Director in Köthen (1717-1723), Cantor of the Thomas-Schule, and Music Director in Leipzig (1723-1750). During his lifetime he was recognized as an organ virtuoso and master

of complex counterpoint, but he never traveled outside Germany and consequently was not especially widely known in an age dominated by international music celebrities. His music fell out of favor after his death but was studied and promoted in the 19th century by Felix Mendelssohn and others, leading to a permanent revival. With the exception of opera, which was not called for by his employers, Bach composed in all forms and styles of Baroque music—secular, sacred, solo, ensemble, vocal, and instrumental—achieving comprehensive perfection. After Bach, music developed in another direction, moving into the Classical Era of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. Scholars conventionally use the death of Bach to mark the end of the Baroque era and consider him one of the greatest composers of all time.

Bach likely wrote and performed each of the orchestral works that later became known as the “Brandenburg” Concerti, BWV 1046-1051, between 1711 and 1719 during his time in Weimar and especially Köthen when he had a professional orchestra at his disposal.¹ The original compositional circumstances are unclear, but in 1721 he personally copied the scores and presented them as a set to the Margrave of Brandenburg in Berlin to satisfy a commission from 1718. The difference in capability between the orchestras in Köthen and Berlin makes it almost certain that the six concerti were never performed by the Margrave’s musicians, and the manuscripts sat in the Brandenburg library until they were rediscovered in 1849. They were nearly destroyed during World War II, when first the library and then their evacuation train was bombed; the librarian carrying the scores escaped the train with the manuscripts hidden under his coat. As a group the works are now among the most iconic pieces of the Baroque era and perhaps the best-loved of all of Bach’s orchestral compositions.

The “Brandenburgs” are also among the most analyzed and discussed of all Baroque works, with scholars from the 19th to the 21st centuries weighing in on everything from musical structure to philosophy, authenticity, and performance practice. In a recent *New York Times* article, for example, musicologist Michael Marissen suggested that the “Brandenburgs” are infused with religious meaning, that they explore issues of hierarchy and order, and that Bach wrote them essentially as church cantatas with implicit,

¹ *Philipp Spitta (d. 1894) referred to the works as the “Brandenburg” Concerti in his biography of Bach published in 1873. The popular name replaced the original title and remains the moniker by which the pieces are known today.*

non-verbal “texts.”² He suggests that Bach, always the devout Lutheran, deliberately invoked images through his instrumentation and musical material that were fairly radical to 18th-century ears, portraying the struggle of the sinful world and the comfort of the divine. Bach’s intentions along these lines are not known, and in the absence of any direct evidence, remain unknowable. Such interpretations, while provocative, remain subordinate to the persuasiveness of the music itself. Köthen was Calvinist and used fairly simple music in its church services, freeing Bach to compose primarily secular music during his time there, including many of the great instrumental works, such as the suites for solo cello, sonatas and partitas for solo violin, orchestral suites, and others. Bach modelled his concerti on the Italian *concerto grosso*, an important Baroque musical form written to showcase a small group of solo instruments (*concertino* or *principale*) vs orchestral accompaniment (*concerto* or *tutti*). Given that the works were written at different times, they show Bach’s individual experiments with a relatively new musical form rather than a deliberate, through-conceived set of compositions. That said, he revised the works—and established the present order—when he prepared the manuscript for delivery to the Margrave of Brandenburg.

The essence of the *concerto grosso* form is the interaction between the concertino and concerto groups of instruments. Bach presents different variations on this idea by contrasting sonorities and changing the relative importance of the solo and ensemble groups in each of the six works. He scored the pieces for an unusually wide variety of instruments, probably to showcase the individual musicians with whom he worked in Köthen. Often played on period instruments with mellower sonorities than modern counterparts, the Concerti provide interesting insight into performance practice of the time. They include one of the last few appearances of the recorder in Bach’s works and in the period. Although Vivaldi, Telemann, and even C.P.E. Bach wrote concerti for recorder, the transverse flute had become standard by the end of the century. Similarly, the *clarino*, the natural trumpet that is virtually synonymous with Baroque music, was waning because of its limited harmonic capabilities. These instruments and others were eclipsed by technologically more advanced types: The addition of valves expanded the harmonic range, enabling more instruments to play more evenly and easily in all (or nearly all) keys as composers exploited the harmonic system of Bach’s

² Michael Marissen, *There’s More Religion Than You Think in Bach’s ‘Brandenburgs,’* New York Times (December 20, 2018), based on his 2016 book, *Bach and God* (Oxford University Press).

time. The Berkshire Bach Society has a tradition of performing all six “Brandenburg” Concerti on modern instruments that capture the thrilling quality of the originals but that are suited to the size and acoustics of today’s concert halls.

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 1 in F Major, BWV 1046 is scored for a concertino of two *corni di caccia* (natural horns), three oboes, bassoon, and *violino piccolo* (high violin), with tutti strings and continuo. The work is the only “Brandenburg” with four movements, and it exists in a shorter version, the Sinfonia, BWV 1046a, that dates from Bach’s time in Weimar. He reused the first movement as the Sinfonia in Cantata 52, *Falsche Welt, dir traue ich nicht* (*False World, I trust you not*), BWV 52, scored without the *violino piccolo*, and the third movement as the opening chorus in the secular Cantata 207, *Vereinigte Zwietracht der wechselnden Saiten* (*The United Discord of the Quivering Strings*), BWV 207, changing the horns for trumpets. The large number of instruments in the solo group of “Brandenburg” No. 1 sets the standard for the unusual scoring that Bach uses in the other Concerti, and creates a substantial orchestral texture for one of the longest works of the set.

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 2 in F Major, BWV 1047, is scored for a concertino of clarino, recorder, oboe, and violin, with tutti strings and continuo. It is thought to have been written as a tribute to Köthen trumpet virtuoso J.L. Schreiber when Bach arrived at court in December 1717 or early the following year, but it may have originated earlier. In 1713 Bach visited Weissenfels to perform the Hunting Cantata, BWV 208, in the birthday celebrations for Duke Christian (d. 1736). At the time, Weissenfels was home to the clarino specialist Johann Kaspar Altenburg, who led the Duke’s trumpet corps and who likely made a big impression on the composer. Regardless of its genesis, however, the work is probably the best-known of the “Brandenburg” Concerti and is a perpetual challenge to modern-day trumpeters. Though Bach contrasts the different sonorities of winds and strings throughout the piece, the signature sound is the clarino that plays in the first and third movements, sitting out the D minor *Andante* because it cannot play the accidentals required. Clarino playing as a skill was lost in the 19th century, and with it the ability to perform much of Baroque literature for the trumpet. In the 20th century, the historically-informed performance movement revived the style, but the virtuosic clarino part in “Brandenburg” No. 2—one of the most difficult in the entire repertoire—is still often played on a modern valve trumpet.

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 3 in G Major, BWV 1048, is scored for three violins, three violas, three cellos, and basso continuo. The all-string ensemble acts as both concertino and concerto, handing off thematic material among the different registers and groups, and emerging and receding as soloist and accompaniment. Some writers have commented that Bach was making a not-so-veiled reference to the Trinity by structuring the third Concerto around the number three and that the ternary form was reinforced by using *ritornello* (a recurring refrain) in the first and third movements. In the second movement, Bach departs from the other “Brandenburgs” by writing simply an E minor half-cadence (partial conclusion) with a *fermata* (hold). Exactly what he intended to follow the half cadence is not clear—virtuosic improvisation, a short pause in the texture, a place for a favorite movement from another work, or something else entirely. Conventional performance practice suggests that the half cadence should be followed immediately by a movement in the same key. Consistent with that idea, in today’s concert Berkshire Bach plays the Adagio from the Trio Sonata in G Major, BWV 1038. The Adagio is short and in the expected key of E minor. Whatever Bach intended, he reworked the first movement of “Brandenburg” No. 3 in 1729 for the Sinfonia of Cantata 174, *Ich liebe den Höchsten von ganzem Gemüte (I love the highest with my entire being)*, BWV 174.

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 4 in G Major, BWV 1049, is scored for a concertino of violin and two recorders, or *fiauto d’echo*, with tutti strings and continuo. Similar to the enigma of the middle movement of “Brandenburg” No. 3, what Bach meant by *fiauto d’echo* has been the subject of much debate—it was possibly a specific instrument such as the flageolet or the English “echo flute” that exists in historical references (proposed by Thurston Dart and others); recorders in G vs F (advocated by recorderist and former Berkshire Bach Society Chair, Bernard Krainis); or a specific musical performance practice (followed by Nicholas Harnoncourt, who created an echo effect by positioning the recorders off-stage). Today the wind parts are typically performed by alto recorder or transverse flute. The violin part is virtuosic in the first and third movements, and generally background support in the second. Bach also arranged the work as the Concerto for Harpsichord in F Major, BWV 1057.

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 5 in D Major, BWV 1050, is scored for a concertino of harpsichord, transverse flute, and violin, with tutti strings and continuo. The harpsichord is part of both groups—*obbligato* (required) among

the soloists, and *continuo* (accompanying) in the tutti. Bach may have written the piece in 1719 in connection with his acquisition of a fine Mietke harpsichord for the Köthen court, or even two years earlier for the aborted musical duel with French harpsichordist Louis Marchand. With fine irony, he used a Marchand theme in the second movement of the work, but the Frenchman never heard it, proving a no-show on the day of the duel and leaving Bach the winner by default. The scoring is for a popular chamber music combination of the time—violin, flute, and harpsichord—and the work has been described as the first true concerto for solo harpsichord because of the extended solo keyboard passage in the first movement. The virtuosity required suggests that Bach himself was the soloist in early performances, showcasing his legendary keyboard skill.

“Brandenburg” Concerto No. 6 in B-flat Major, BWV 1051, is scored for two *viola da braccio* (viola), two *viola da gamba* (cello), cello, *violone* (double bass), and continuo. The omission of violins is unusual, and the work is somewhat archaic in its choice of style and scoring—the first movement opens with canonic polyphony; the *viola da gamba* (an early version of the cello) was considered old-fashioned by 1720. Some writers believe that by giving a prominent role to the *viola da braccio*, not a soloistic instrument at that time, Bach was deliberately disrupting the musical status quo and signaling his eventual resignation from his post as Kapellmeister. A simpler explanation is that his employer, Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen, an enthusiastic *gamba* player, asked him to provide a work in which the Prince could perform as a member of the orchestra. With Leopold playing *gamba*, Bach himself likely took the first *viola* part, and the other Köthen virtuosi ably managed the rest. Regardless, the concerto stands as another example of the creative scoring, diverse inventiveness, and superb orchestral writing that distinguish all of the “Brandenburg” Concerti.

—T.A. McDade



Special Thanks

Producing *Bach at New Year's* is truly a joyful experience because of the collaboration of so many people. Our musicians trade precious time at home with their loved ones on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day plus days prior and post to bring you this elegant and festive concert. Many Berkshire Bach Ensemble members have spent most if not all of the past 27 years with us for this event! We thank our **musicians' families** for sharing their loved ones with us.

To help make this time in the Berkshires more like a visit with friends and family, we call upon many people to host our musicians during *Bach at New Year's*. It is gratifying to see the many wonderful friendships that have grown up between hosts and musicians over the years, and to look forward to new friendships yet to come. Special thanks to **Leslye Heilig**, our housing coordinator, for her efforts to match musicians and hosts, who this year include **Sue and John Corcoran, Leslye Heilig and Lou Davis, Susan and Hank Ferlauto, Deborah Greene and David Goldfarb, Perry Brooks and John Lynn Jones, Carol Noble, Maryann and Bob Norris, Dorothy Phillips, Mary Rogers, Mal Wasserman, Susan Pettie and Michael Wise, and Terry and Jay Wise.**

A special thank you also goes to **Birdie and Nick Joseph**, owners of **The Bistro Box, Leslye Heilig and Lou Davis** (again!) for hosting our New Year's Eve Reception for musicians and Premium Members, **Perry Brooks, Paul Johansen, John Lynn Jones, Terrill McDade, and Mal Wasserman** for countless hours behind the scenes, our friends at **Kwik Print**, the supportive administrative and box office staff at our three venues, and most importantly, our season-long media sponsors, **NEPR** and **WMHT**, for co-presenting this concert series. Thank you all so very much.

Finally, our very special thanks go to the **Charles and Mildred Schnurmacher Foundation** for their continued recognition and support of this iconic New Year's tradition in the Berkshires, **our Members**, and **You, our Audience**, for making *Bach at New Year's* a special part of your holiday tradition. Enjoy the performance and come back again next year.

Until then, may your New Year be filled with good health, good music, and love!

Paula Hatch | Executive Director

~ Frohes neues Jahr! ~



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