

ABSTRACTS

FRIDAY OCTOBER 2

9–10:30 am

Paper Session 1 (Fynes Hall)

Derek Stauff (Hillsdale College), chair

Notational Implications from the Fasch Chorale Manuscript

Luke Dahn (Ambrose University)

Among the Berlin Sing-Akademie materials recovered in Kyiv in 1999 is the Fasch collection of Bach four-part chorales (D-Bsa SA 818), a source of particular importance given its early date of 1762. This paper offers a detailed examination of the manuscript's notational peculiarities and considers their implications for our still incomplete understanding of the transmission of Bach's four-part chorales. Most significantly, the analysis demonstrates that the manuscript's immediate source was notated in a two-stave keyboard format. As with other early chorale collections, the settings in the Fasch manuscript exhibit occasional divergences from their appearances in autograph sources and in other chorale collections; these variants are also examined.

William H. Scheide, the Bach Aria Group, and Music Advocacy since World War II

Stephen Crist (Emory University)

William H. Scheide was a vigorous advocate for the music of Johann Sebastian Bach during the period of nearly seventy years, from the end of World War II until his passing in 2014 at the age of 100. Scheide's generosity to the American Bach Society is enshrined in the competitive Research Grants and the Prize that bear his name. His most important contribution, however, was the Bach Aria Group, which he formed in 1946 so that musicians could "become immersed in the world of Bach arias," as Scheide himself wrote in *The New York Times* (1948). For more than thirty years, until the original Bach Aria Group was disbanded in 1980, Scheide hired a stable of distinguished vocalists and instrumentalists to record Bach's vocal music and to perform it around the world, including in an annual series of concerts at Town Hall and other leading venues in New York.

This paper provides a critical appraisal of Scheide's and his group's contributions to the promotion of Bach's music, including the documentary film "A Time for Bach" (1948). It draws

on personal conversations and archival materials in the Bach Aria Group collection at the Library of Congress. The cast of characters includes stars of the Metropolitan Opera, the conductor Robert Shaw, and Albert Einstein. Examination of the formative work of the Bach Aria Group is long overdue, and it contributes a significant new strand to the emerging picture of music advocacy in the US since World War II.

11 am – 12:30pm

Interview/Conversation (Lindsay-Crossman Chapel)

Organ Performance and Improvisation

Although general Bach scholarship is plentiful, less is to be found in the pedagogical realm as it relates to J.S. Bach and his circle. This panel will examine how Bach's students were trained to develop both improvisational fluency and compositional skill through structured engagement with basso continuo practice, chorale-based instruction, and clausulae. Drawing on sources such as the Sibley Chorale Book and situating them alongside related traditions of partimento and historical pedagogy, we will examine the centrality of pattern-based learning and voice-leading frameworks in eighteenth-century musical training. Clausulae especially are considered as essential building blocks that bridge improvisation and composition, offering insight into how students internalized stylistic norms. This discussion aims to provide a historically grounded perspective that not only clarifies Bachian teaching methods but also contributes to broader discussions on the revival and application of historical improvisation practices today.

Participants:

Balint Karosi, organist

Ruben Valenzuela, moderator

2 – 3:30 pm

Roundtable (Fynes Hall)

Bach Festivals & Commemorations

Bach festivals provide a plethora of diverse ways to celebrate Bach, from performances featuring historically informed practices and Baroque instruments, to presentations of modern interpretations of his works, to commissions of new works inspired by interaction with Bach's music. Festival conductors and directors are tasked with providing relevant, exciting, relatable concerts for modern audiences that include both Bach lovers and those who may never have encountered Baroque music in concert before. This roundtable discussion will focus on the intersection between scholarship, performance, and the variety of strategies used when bringing Bach's music to modern audiences in these festival contexts. David Chin (Bachfest Malaysia), Dirk Garner (BW Bach Festival), Christopher Jackson (Bethlehem Bach Choir), and Michael

Maul (BachFest Leipzig), with Rebekah Franklin (Oklahoma Baptist University and discussion moderator) will discuss questions and topics including community engagement, scholarship in the context of festival performances and audience outreach endeavors, the variety of roles needed in Bach festivals (conductors, performers, scholars, administrators, audience members, and combinations of these), presenting Bach's music and beyond in twenty-first century festival contexts, embracing philosophical intersections between Bach's music and non-Western cultures, and more, in order to more fully explore how Bach is, and should be, celebrated in 21st-Century Bach festivals.

Participants:

Dirk Garner (Baldwin Wallace Bach Festival)

David Chin (Bachfest Malaysia)

Christopher Jackson (Bethlehem Bach Choir)

Michael Maul (Bachfest Leipzig)

Rebekah Franklin (Oklahoma Baptist University, moderator)

4 – 5:30 pm

Paper Session 2 (Fynes Hall)

Reginald Sanders (Kenyon College), chair

*Performing Bach Diverse: QueerPassion, Pride and
Community-Building at the 2025 Bachfest Leipzig*

Kailan Rubinoff (UNC Greensboro)

The *QueerPassion* production at the 2025 Bachfest Leipzig sheds light on contemporary celebrations and reinterpretations of Bach's music with new messaging. A contrafact of the *St. John Passion*, the *QueerPassion* resets Bach's music to a libretto by Thomas Höft foregrounding stories of homophobic violence in the eighteenth century (1730 Utrecht sodomy trials, a Prussian trans man) and recent times (Orlando, Chechnya, Lagos). Following its 2022 premiere (Utrecht Early Music Festival), the project was reworked for the Bachfest theme of "Transformation," incorporating the professional Baroque orchestra Art House 17 and soloists, with a local women's choir and gay men's chorus singing the chorales. Leipzig thus presented a provocative context where Bach fans, the LGBTQ+ community, professionals and amateurs would intersect.

Building on my earlier work on the *QueerPassion* (*Bach Perspectives*, forthcoming 2027), this paper draws on ethnographic research I conducted in Leipzig, supported in part by an ABS Diversity Grant, including observation and interviews among musicians, and an audience

survey. I situate the *QueerPassion* at the intersection of scholarship on participatory musicking (Turino 2008, Reily & Brucker 2017, Bartleet & Higgins 2018), queer music studies (Attinello 2006, Maus & Whitely 2022, MacLachlan 2024), music revivals (Bithell & Hill 2014), and festival studies (Falassi 1987, McDonald, Snyder & Reed 2025). My study explores how the utopian vision of the funder Creative Europe to “safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage” played out in Leipzig: while fostering tolerance and understanding among participants and audience, the *QueerPassion* also exposed sometimes competing artistic and ideological values (professionalism vs. amateur community-building; queer pride and identity vs. Bach reverence and historical authenticity in performance) with lively, but not always harmonious, results. The audience survey provides further insight into how audiences hear contrafacts, testing theories of intertextuality in listening (Lacasse 2000, Oettinger 2016).

Celebrating Bach in the German Classroom

Noelle Heber (Berlin, Germany)

Johann Sebastian Bach spent much of his storied life in educational settings, first as a student and later as a teacher, and his music has become a staple element of music school and conservatory programs worldwide. Today, Bach is widely celebrated as a cultural icon in Germany, but how is he represented in contemporary classrooms in his homeland? His role in the broader context of general education in Germany is overshadowed by the wide range of musical genres that should be covered in the limited time allocated for music lessons. In the majority of music textbooks, Bach is merely mentioned as an exemplar of Baroque music, with little in-depth treatment beyond this historical context. Nevertheless, new initiatives are emerging to address this gap, such as classroom resources from the *Neue Bachgesellschaft* and the *Bayerischer Rundfunk* (Bavarian Broadcasting). The *Bachhaus* museum in Eisenach offers students interactive experiences related to Bach’s life and music. Such initiatives aim to ensure Bach’s relevance to music appreciation by average students.

The present study combines curriculum analysis with practical insights from classroom experience, teacher perspectives, and student feedback. It highlights both the obstacles – such as underqualified teaching staff and competing curricular demands – and the creative strategies that seek to renew interest in Bach’s music. Although the focus is on Germany, the implications are global: how can historical figures like Bach be celebrated meaningfully in modern classrooms? This paper argues that sustaining Bach’s relevance requires innovative approaches that connect his music to contemporary educational goals, ensuring that his legacy continues to inspire future generations.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 2

9 – 10:30 am

Paper Session 3 (Fynes Hall)

Danielle Kuntz (Baldwin Wallace University), chair

*Beyond the Concert Hall: The Legacy of the Sociedade Bach de São Paulo
and the Making of a Brazilian Bach Culture (1935–1977)*

Joevan Caitano (Paderborn University, Germany)

This paper reassesses the cultural and musical legacy of the Sociedade Bach de São Paulo (1935–1977), one of the earliest and most influential institutions dedicated to the promotion of Johann Sebastian Bach in Latin America. Founded by the Austrian musicians Martin and Tatiana Braunwieser, the Sociedade Bach played a decisive role in shaping Bach reception in Brazil before the consolidation of professional orchestras, university music departments, and historically informed performance practices. Yet despite its historical significance, the institution remains understudied in international Bach scholarship.

Drawing on archival research conducted in São Paulo—including concert programs, administrative documents, private correspondence, score editions, and contemporaneous press coverage—this study reconstructs the Sociedade Bach’s artistic, pedagogical, and cultural mission. The paper argues that the institution created a distinctly Brazilian Bach culture, characterized by four interrelated features: (1) the translation and adaptation of Bach’s works into Portuguese, enabling performances of the *Johannes-Passion*, cantata arias, and selected choral movements in local churches and cultural centers; (2) the cultivation of an amateur yet musically disciplined public sphere, in which Bach’s music functioned as a symbol of artistic and moral *Bildung*; (3) the integration of Bach into broader networks of immigrant musical life, in which European émigrés, Brazilian-born musicians, and cultural societies collaborated to negotiate identity and aesthetic authority; and (4) the emergence of Bach as a mediating figure in processes of modernization and cultural internationalization in mid-twentieth-century São Paulo.

By positioning the Sociedade Bach within transnational histories of musical migration, coloniality, and the circulation of canonical repertoire, the paper demonstrates that Bach’s reception in Brazil cannot be understood merely as a percussive influence from Europe, but as a locally constructed, socially embedded, and culturally negotiated phenomenon. This case study expands the geography of Bach reception and highlights Latin America as an active site of Bach’s twentieth-century global afterlives.

*Pastiche, Counterfeit, Homage: Manuel Ponce and the
Reception of Bach in the Spanish-speaking World in the 20th Century*

Ricardo de la Torre (Pacific Lutheran University)

In the 1920s Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia was embarked on the process of establishing the classical guitar as a standard, respectable concert instrument. One of the problems Segovia encountered was the lack of repertoire comparable in quantity and prestige to the canonic works of other instruments' literatures. In addition to commissioning pieces from living composers, Segovia transcribed works by Bach and some of his contemporaries and predecessors. In the way Fritz Kreisler had presented his own work as newly discovered pieces by eighteenth-century forgotten masters, Segovia commissioned Mexican composer Manuel Ponce to write music he could present as guitar transcriptions of lute works by —initially— Bach. They soon realized this was an ill-advised choice that would expose their stratagem, so they attributed the resulting Suite in A minor to Bach's almost exact contemporary Sylvius Leopold Weiss. Ponce occasionally engaged in pastiche-like exercises in baroque style, sometimes using thematic material taken from Bach and Handel, not only by producing several other works for Segovia but also for his own instrument, the piano, as well as for string ensemble.

This lecture will present a general panorama of the introduction and reception of Bach's music in the Spanish-speaking world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and will focus on the examination of several pieces by Ponce: Suite in A minor for guitar, Prelude and Fugue on a Theme by Bach for piano, Four Fugues for piano, and *Petite suite dans le style ancien* for strings. Bach's influence is not only perceptible in these works but the main motivation behind their composition. The presentation will place this influence in the broader context of Mexican classical composition and explore Ponce's procedures and seemingly unusual sources (such as developing a new fugue out of a motive from Bach's E major fugue BWV 854).

11 am – 12 pm

Keynote Address (Fynes Hall)

J. S. Bach: A Relational Aesthetics

Bettina Varwig (University of Cambridge)

Why and how might we still celebrate Bach today? In the face of post-canonical and postcolonial critique, this is not an easy question to answer. In this paper, I suggest that what Bach's music can offer us in our current predicament is a critique of and possible alternative to the *Menschenbild* that underpins late capitalist modernity. I develop this argument neither from a universalizing standpoint nor from within the notes, but from an ongoing practice-based collaboration with a group of professional musicians. In this project, we use some of my historical research into early modern physiology as inspiration for finding different ways of

being in the body musically. What is emerging from this experiment is the outline of what I might call, with Nicolas Bourriaud, a relational aesthetics: a “hands-on-utopia” in which a disposition towards bodily porousness can engender transformative experiences of intercorporeality, interactional synchrony, distributed creativity, and collective catharsis.

This potential for producing shared experiences of “resonance” or “unselfing” is by no means unique to Bach; but I argue that, due to its historical position at the fraying edges of Western modernity, his music is peculiarly suited to destabilizing that period’s rationalist-individualist anthropology. This is in no way to gloss over the problems inherent in the *Menschenbild* of Bach’s own time, or the role of his music in promoting the xenophobic agendas of the Lutheran church. History has taught us that music’s malleable capacity for producing resonance is also politically its most dangerous attribute. Therefore, if we are going to continue to remake Bach’s music in our own image (as we seem wont to do), we might do well to make an active, informed choice over which of its multiple strands of meaningfulness we care to engage.

1:30 – 3:00 pm

Panel Discussion (Fynes Hall)

Ich liebe den Höchsten mit ganzem Gemüte, BWV 174

Among the holdings of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute are thirteen of the original performing parts for *Ich liebe den Höchsten mit ganzem Gemüte* BWV 174, a cantata for the second day of Pentecost composed to a libretto by Christian Friedrich Henrici (Picander) and first performed in 1729. This panel will offer an introduction to the work and its many challenges.

Michael Marissen will discuss the work’s text and its place in the liturgy. Daniel R. Melamed will introduce the work’s original sources and their scattered history. Ellen Exner will examine Bach’s adaptation of the first movement of his Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 as the cantata’s opening sinfonia.

The original materials will be on display in the RBI library, offering a rare opportunity of seeing some of Bach’s original working material for his duties as Thomascantor and City Music Director.

Participants:

Ellen Exner (Juilliard School)

Michael Marissen (Swarthmore College, emeritus)

Daniel R. Melamed (Bloomington Bach Cantata Project)

3:30 – 4:15 pm

Paper Session 4 (Fynes Hall)

Matthew Dirst (University of Houston), chair

Quantz and the Bach Circle

David Schulenberg (Wagner College)

It has been more than a quarter century since the late Mary Oleskiewicz completed her dissertation on Quantz and the Bach circle. Yet recognition of the musical relationships between Quantz and the Bachs remains limited. This presentation summarizes her findings together with more recent observations.

Oleskiewicz demonstrated parallels between works of Quantz and J. S. Bach, including the Musical Offering. She identified keyboard instruments probably used by the Bachs at Berlin and showed that Emanuel Bach was a valued musician at the Prussian court, by no means unappreciated by King Friedrich II. She also established a chronology for Quantz's 500 sonatas and concertos.

Emanuel Bach called Quantz a genius; ongoing work on an edition of Quantz's concertos reveals commonalities between works of the two composers. Supposed innovations by Emanuel Bach, such as his use of instrumental recitative, have direct models in works by Quantz that would have been familiar to Emanuel Bach as royal chamber musician.

Oleskiewicz also corrected hundreds of entries in Horst Augsbach's catalogue of Quantz's works, adding sources and refining attributions and copyist identifications. In particular, Oleskiewicz showed that the handwriting of violinist J.G. Freudenberg, copyist of Quantz's music as well as many Bach sources, has been confused with that of assistants.

Additionally, Oleskiewicz showed that Quantz preceded C. P. E. Bach in compositions belonging to the *Empfindsamkeit* and *Sturm und Drang*. Although Emanuel Bach carried these styles further, Quantz was an important source of ideas not only for C. P. E. Bach but for his younger half-brother J. C. Bach, and through them for later composers, including Haydn and Mozart.

This presentation will be complemented by a display of relevant items in the Riemenschneider library and concert performances of works by Bach and Quantz by Les Délices.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 3

9 – 10:45 am

Paper Session 5 (Fynes Hall)

Paul Walker (University of Notre Dame), chair

Foursquare Gambits Across Bach's Catalog

Christopher Doll (Rutgers University)

Many of Bach's instrumental works open with a harmonic-phrasal unit comprising four distinct, evenly paced stages beginning and ending on a tonic, with a dominant in the penultimate third stage—a functionally complete “foursquare” progression, T | x | D | T. Scholars discussing this kind of structural gambit tend to focus on its appearance not in Bach but in Classical works, implying—and at times explicitly asserting—that this idiom was relatively uncommon in the pre-Galant Baroque era (Meyer 1980, Gjerdingen 1988 and 2007, Rawbone and Jan 2019). While foursquares likely reached peak popularity in the late 1700s, they were widespread beforehand, and this paper establishes a taxonomy illustrated by numerous examples from across Bach's instrumental catalog.

Following Doll 2018, this paper distinguishes foursquares according to their second stage, usually a dominant or predominant, with T | D | D | T constituting a “shuttle” and T | P | D | T a “circuit.” Additionally, bass motions are inventoried according to three categories: pedal, cadential resolution (Sol–Do), or historical *clausula* (*cantizans* Ti–Do, *tenorizans* Re–Do, and *altizans* Sol/Fa–Mi). Augmenting the basic shuttle and circuit (and their variable basses) are two related structures, what I call the “midstep,” T | D | T–D | T, and the “quickstep,” T | T | D | T, the latter a noticeably simpler gambit and the one most at home in imitative settings. After considering straightforward examples of all these structures, I turn to more complex cases, involving metrical displacement, triple meter (most commonly in sarabandes), embellishment with additional chords, or displaying a combination of these techniques. The sheer number of examples (including some in vocal works, too), as well as their diversity of features, suggests that foursquares were an integral part of Bach's compositional idiom.

Singular Episodes: H(a)unting Hidden Voices in J. S. Bach's Solo Violin Fugues

Marcelo Rebuffi (Case Western Reserve University / Cleveland Institute of Music)

The works for solo violin by J. S. Bach present enormous challenges for performers, not only because they must turn the many notes written in the score into sound, but also because they must infer and reconstruct pitches that, although carefully omitted from the text by the composer, still exert a powerful agency within the musical structure. The fugues of the *Six Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin* are particularly revealing in this respect, as they include

apparently simple monophonic episodes that condense multiple melodic lines into a single voice, creating the illusion of virtual polyphony.

In such contrapuntal textures, Bach often conceals thematic material, including fugue subjects, within passages traditionally understood as episodic. This poses a problem for fugue theory, since episodes are typically defined by the absence of subject entries—an assumption that helps explain why these melodies are frequently overlooked in analytical and performative traditions. By introducing unexpected musical material in these moments, Bach subverts the normative concept of the episode and plays with listeners' expectations.

This paper explores how Bach employs polyphonic melodies in two fugues for solo violin, offering hypothetical reconstructions of their implicit polyphony. By focusing on analytically problematic passages and overlooked thematic presences, the paper examines the challenges these sections pose for music theory and discusses their significant implications for performance practice.