

After two years online, the Baldwin Wallace Bach Festival goes live again from April 7-10

by Daniel Hathaway



Nine decades ago when it was still a college, the grand plan for Baldwin Wallace University's annual Bach Festival was based on a repeating cycle of four of the Leipzig cantor's major vocal works, giving students the opportunity to sing and play the two Passions, the B-minor Mass, and the Christmas Oratorio during their undergraduate days in Berea.

Back on track after a two-year online exile, the 2022 Festival, enhanced by a \$100,000 gift from the Kulas Foundation, will comprise 15 in-person events, including a performance of four of the six cantatas that make up Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*.

The weekend will also continue the 50th anniversary celebration of the founding of BW's Riemenschneider Bach Institute, named for scholar and festival founder Albert Riemenschneider, a party that was interrupted by the pandemic in 2020.



Part of the Kulas funding will support the appearances of two period ensembles now based in Boston that were formed largely by students who met at Oberlin and at the Juilliard School. The Diderot String Quartet “bring a fresh approach to works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,” and the Baroque string band ACRONYM “is dedicated to giving modern premieres of the wild instrumental music of the seventeenth century.”

On Friday afternoon, ACRONYM will be featured in the program “What Bach Heard,” a selection of music the composer was exposed to growing up, and the Diderot will play portions of J. S. Bach’s *Art of Fugue*, paired with Beethoven’s Op. 74 quartet on Saturday afternoon.



The guest ensembles will join BW’s resident instrumentalists for side-by-side performances with BWV: Cleveland’s Bach Chorus, and with the BW Motet Singers for the *Christmas Oratorio* on Saturday evening.

Our Diary entries for this Thursday, Friday, and Saturday will burrow deeper into the Festival repertoire, including comments from artistic director Dirk Garner and the performers.

Click [here](#) for the detailed schedule and ticket information.

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