

COLORADO *Bach* ENSEMBLE

James Kim, Artistic Director



Colorado Bach Ensemble Season

2026

2027

coloradobach.org

Statement from the Director

Greetings from the Artistic Director,

This past season marked several exciting milestones for our organization. For the first time, we welcomed a new Executive Director, received a national grant, and presented our largest audience for a major work other than *Messiah* with Bach's *St. John Passion*. We also hosted a week-long festival featuring a variety of events culminating in three performances of the *St. John Passion*. We are deeply grateful for your continued support, which made all of this possible.

We are thrilled to share another inspiring season filled with both beloved masterpieces and remarkable discoveries. Two of this season's cantatas – BWV 4 and BWV 150 – come from Bach's early years as a cantata composer, while BWV 57 and BWV 147 reflect his later, more mature style. Our two major works include Handel's *Messiah*, the cherished holiday tradition and one of the most celebrated oratorios of the season, and Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, the final major work he completed. This monumental masterpiece also holds special significance for us, as it was the work that launched the Colorado Bach Ensemble in our inaugural 2012 season.

As we look ahead, we are also strengthening the organization through several important initiatives and appointments. We have established the Founding Artistic Director Fellowship and added key staff positions, including an Operations Coordinator. We are also delighted to welcome our new Chorus Personnel Manager, Michael Hoffman, who will oversee chorus operations and coordinate our visiting guest artists.

These developments will greatly expand our capacity as we continue fulfilling our mission: bringing world-class performances of J.S. Bach's music to audiences across Colorado.

We look forward to seeing you this season.

James Kim

Masterworks

Messiah

December 18th–20th, 2026

B Minor Mass

February 26th–27th, 2027

Cantata Insight Series

BWV 4

October 11th, 2026

BWV 57

January 31st, 2027

BWV 150

April 11th, 2027

BWV 147

May 9th, 2027

Messiah

December 18th, 2026 | 7:00 p.m.
Parker United Methodist Church, Parker

December 19th, 2026 | 7:00 p.m.
University Center for the Arts, Ft. Collins

December 20th, 2026 | 2:00 p.m.
Wellshire Presbyterian Church, Denver



Clara
Rottsolk



Abigail
Nims



Gene
Stenger



Andrew
Garland

Handel's beloved *Messiah* returns to CBE this December, highlighting the holiday season with a complete performance of this brilliant and inspiring masterwork. Composed in 1741, its Dublin premiere began a remarkable ascent as one of the great pillars of classical music in the hearts and minds of audiences worldwide.

Messiah's endurance is rooted in a message that transcends its formal context: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." Handel's dramatic orchestration, exquisite Baroque counterpoint, and evocative word painting breathe drama and intimacy into the unfolding narrative of Christ, culminating with a promise of new life, redemption, and enduring hope.

B Minor Mass

February 26th, 2027 | 7:30 p.m.
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Littleton

February 27th, 2027 | 7:30 p.m.
Parsons Theatre, Northglenn



Nola
Richardson



Abigail
Nims



James
Reese



Harrison
Hintzsche



Enrico
Lagasca

The *B Minor Mass* is both a masterpiece and an enigma in Bach's towering body of work. Completed in the final years of his life, it represents a summary of his vast musical knowledge and skill.

There is ongoing debate about why the greatest Protestant composer would choose to set a Catholic mass. At two hours in length, there was no liturgical service suitable for performance, adding to the mystery. What is known is that the *B Minor Mass* contains some of the most glorious, complex, and inspired writing ever to flow from Bach's pen, standing as one of the greatest achievements in all of art.

BWV 4

October 11th, 2026 | 6:15 p.m.

Wellshire Presbyterian Church, Denver



**Edmund
Milly**

Widely regarded as Bach's earliest known cantata, BWV 4 was composed for Easter Sunday 1707 shortly after his 22nd birthday. Even at this formative age, it incorporates stylistic elements that would endure for Bach's entire compositional career.

After a sinfonia, the work is laid out as a palindrome, a theme present in his final choral work, the *B Minor Mass*. The text is an exploration of the relationship between life and death, and Christ's sacrifice and the Paschal feast. Each movement ends with an exuberant "Hallelujah!", emphasizing the timeless continuity and unity of Old and New Testament symbolism in the narrative.

BWV 57

January 31st, 2027 | 6:15 p.m.

Wellshire Presbyterian Church, Denver



**Clara
Rottsolk**



**Andrew
Garland**

Set for the second day of Christmas, BWV 57 highlights Bach's exceptional talents as a dramatist. Despite not writing any operas, the cantata is driven by a dramatic dialogue between Jesus and the Soul, depicted by bass and soprano soloists. He makes use of *secco recitative* — a common operatic feature of his time.

The final question posed by the soprano in the penultimate movement is, "My Savior, I die with the greatest eagerness, here you have my soul, what will you give me?" The final chorale answers: "Rule yourself, beloved ... I will remain your soul's friend for ever and ever."

BWV 150

April 11th, 2027 | 6:15 p.m.

Wellshire Presbyterian Church, Denver



Mackenzie
Laun



Gabrielle
Razafinjatovo



Michael
Hoffman



Andrew
Garland

If BWV 4 is not Bach's first known church cantata, BWV 150 certainly is. Even at a young age, Bach adopts an exploratory approach to form, narrative, and musical content. Chorales, recitatives, and da capo arias are completely absent – Bach chooses instead to highlight his formidable polyphonic and contrapuntal skills in seven dramatic movements.

He also sets both biblical text and contemporary poetry – a theme that's common in his late cantatas but rare at this stage of his career. He also makes use of the lamento bass, a descending chromatic theme appearing in his last works, including *The Art of Fugue* and the Crucifixus of his *B Minor Mass*.

BWV 147

May 9th, 2027 | 6:15 p.m.

Wellshire Presbyterian Church, Denver



Nola
Richardson



Rebecca
Robinson



Michael
Hoffman



Andrew
Garland

Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben (Heart and mouth and deed and mind) is rightly praised as one of Bach's most dramatic, large-scale cantatas as well as one of his most beloved. It was originally conceived in six movements for Advent in 1716, but he expanded it to ten in his first year as Thomaskantor in Leipzig.

The sixth and tenth movements feature the chorale tune "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," to which Bach added his famous arpeggiated string accompaniment. He also added two oboes and oboe d'amore which are featured throughout, and an expanded role for the trumpet.

Why Bach?

Johann Sebastian Bach was a German composer and organist. The most important member of the Bach family, his genius combined outstanding performing musicianship with supreme creative powers in which forceful and original inventiveness, technical mastery and intellectual control are perfectly balanced. While it was in the former capacity, as a keyboard virtuoso, that in his lifetime he acquired an almost legendary fame, it is the latter virtues and accomplishments, as a composer, that by the end of the 18th century earned him a unique historical position. His musical language was distinctive and extraordinarily varied, drawing together and surmounting the techniques, the styles and the general achievements of his own and earlier generations and leading on to new perspectives which later ages have received and understood in a great variety of ways.

The first authentic posthumous account of his life, with a summary catalogue of his works, was put together by his son Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and his pupil Johann Friedrich Agricola soon after his death and certainly before March 1751 (published as *Nekrolog*, 1754). J.N. Forkel planned a detailed Bach biography in the early 1770s and carefully collected first-hand information on Bach, chiefly from his two eldest sons; the book appeared in 1802, by when the Bach revival had begun and various projected collected editions of Bach's works were under way; it continues to serve, together with the 1754 obituary and the other 18th-century documents, as the foundation of Bach biography.

Our Mission and Values

Colorado Bach Ensemble is dedicated to performing and promoting the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and his contemporaries with a special focus on Bach's vocal masterpieces. Under the guidance of its artistic director, James Kim, Colorado Bach Ensemble's mission is to study and perform Bach's music in the spirit and with the grace of the Baroque style, to grow the audience for Bach's music through concerts, recording, and tours, and to cultivate a deep appreciation for Bach's music through engaging educational programs.

SUPPORT CBE

The largest single source of our outside funding comes from patrons like you. Your generous contributions, large and small, help us continue to bring great performances to you year after year and help us make our performances affordable to all.

Ways to Support

- Donate online at ColoradoBach.org
- Mail a check payable to:
'Colorado Bach Ensemble'
4500 E Hampden Ave
Cherry Hills Village, CO 80113
- Mail a check using the envelope provided in concert programs and mailings
- Contact us about sponsoring one of our Cantata Insight Series concerts or to inquire about other giving opportunities at:

info@coloradobach.org

Special Thanks



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We are grateful for gifts of all sizes.

All donors will be sent an acknowledgment letter.