

[View this email in your browser](#)

Dear Friends,

As a young girl growing up in a small town in North Carolina and studying the piano, I became obsessed with Bach at a young age through his keyboard works. For one thing, the keyboard writing fit beautifully within my smaller hands. I loved the serpentine figures of counterpoint. I loved the joyful, propulsive dance-imbued rhythms of the French Suites I was learning. Later in life, working in New York City as an artist manager, I would end every evening by sitting down at the piano to work through a prelude and fugue or two. The last thing I would play before heading off to bed was the Aria of the Goldberg Variations. Such a spare, simple, perfect, exquisite set of notes -- it felt like it contained the longing and humanity of the whole world. That is Bach.

Last year, new to Saratoga, someone invited me to come to an Advent service at Bethesda Church, tipped off to the fact that I was looking for alternate venues in which to do some winter programming. As I was sitting there listening to the music, I started to imagine what it would be like to be able to hear the instrumental virtuosity of the Brandenburg Concertos soaring in that beautiful space. A year later, thanks to the folks at Bethesda Church – and to the generosity of a number of wonderful people – we are able to present the great Orchestra of St Luke's in a concert of the complete Brandenburg Concertos.

The Concertos are one of Bach's most popular works, but their history holds a strange twist of fate: Bach wrote them as, some people say, a kind of job application to the Margrave of Brandenburg. Many scholars suggest that the Margrave almost certainly never even opened the music, much less had the concertos played. And it is very possible that Bach himself never heard them performed.

And yet, here we are, about to be graced with their presence. I hope you will [join us](#) at Bethesda Church on [December 8](#) as we listen to music that is miraculous both in its composition – and its history.

Warmly,

Elizabeth Sobol
President & CEO

Some of my favorite Bach books and recordings

MUSIC

- [Bach Goldberg Variations – Glenn Gould performance 1959](#)
- [Bach French Suites – Murray Perahia](#)
- [Bach Goldberg Variations – Simone Dinnerstein](#)
- [Bach, JS : Mass In B Minor, Nikolaus Harnoncourt](#)
- [J.S. Bach: Das Wohltemperierte Klavier: Book 1, BWV 846-869 - Fugue in G sharp minor BWV 863 Till Fellner](#)

BOOKS

- [Reinventing Bach, Paul Elie](#)
- [Bach: Music in the Castle of Heaven, John Eliot Gardiner](#)
- [Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid Paperback – February 5, 1999 by Douglas R. Hofstadter](#)



MAKE A DONATION