

# Music Worcester Celebrates Bach's 341st Birthday with 4 Concerts, Cake, and Champagne March 20-22 at Mechanics Hall

*THE COMPLETE BACH continues its 11 year project to present live performances of all known works by J.S. Bach*

WORCESTER, MA, UNITED STATES, January 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Music Worcester celebrates the 341st anniversary of the Baroque composer's birth with the second annual Bach's Birthday Bash Weekend, Friday, March 20 through Sunday, March 22, at historic Mechanics Hall in Worcester, MA. The four concerts presented are all part of [THE COMPLETE BACH](#), Music Worcester's 11-year project to present live performances of all known works by J. S. Bach. Individual performance tickets and weekend passes are available at [musicworchester.org](http://musicworchester.org).

Twice each year, Music Worcester hosts festival weekends as part of THE COMPLETE BACH: BACHtoberfest on the last weekend of October and Bach's Birthday Bash on the weekend closest to J.S. Bach's birthday in March.

"Part of the excitement of the Bach Birthday Bash weekend is that it combines professional and avocational musicians, representing the panoply of performers that Bach himself worked

with in Leipzig," said Chris Shepard, the artistic director of THE COMPLETE BACH. "We begin Friday evening with The Sebastians, considered one of the leading early music ensembles around, and Sunday afternoon welcomes choral groups from the region to be part of



The Sebastians headline Bach's Birthday Bash Weekend playing The Brandenburg Concertos March 20



Artistic Director Chris Shepard conducting The Worcester Chorus



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Cantatathon.

“One of the most exciting things for me about the Cantatathon is that this will be the first time that many of the singers will have the chance to perform Bach with an orchestra, helping to fulfill the goal of THE COMPLETE BACH to convert performers and listeners to lifelong Bach lovers!”

The Sebastians headline the weekend with Friday evening’s performance of the complete Brandenburg Concertos, a set of six concertos that are among Bach’s most iconic compositions. Known for their versatility in programming and instrumentation, The Sebastians are a New York-based

ensemble specializing in the Baroque and classical eras. They have been praised as “sharp-edged and engaging” (The New York Times) and for their “elegant string playing... immaculate in tuning and balance” (Early Music Today).

Concert-goers are invited to sit on stage for Keyboards Up Close with pianist Kristjon Imperio and harpsichordist Frederick Jodry on Saturday afternoon at 4 pm to get close to the performances of two works of Bach’s keyboard repertoire.

An active organ recitalist and collaborative pianist, Imperio will play the Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue. He most recently served on the faculty of Handel and Haydn Society and is the interim executive director of the Pakachoag Music School of Greater Worcester.

Fred Jordy will perform the French Overture in B Minor on harpsichord. One of New England’s most versatile musicians, he performs frequently as a keyboard recitalist, conductor, or singer. Recently retired from the music faculty at Brown University, Jordy has performed in recitals from Paris to San Francisco, and is Co-director of Music at historic Trinity Church in Newport, RI.

On Saturday evening, the Worcester Chamber Music Society (WCMS,) one of THE COMPLETE BACH’s key collaborators, will perform three of Bach’s compositions. Flutist Tracy Kraus, the co-founder and recently retired executive director of WMCS, joins the ensemble for Musical Offering, a collection of keyboard works all based on thematic material given to Bach by Frederick the Great. Pianist Randall Hodgkinson, who is the Grand Prize Winner of the International American Music Competition, will play the intricate and expansive Toccata in F-sharp minor, and The Italian Concerto, which has been called “the ideal solo concerto.”

The Bach Birthday Bash Weekend concludes Sunday afternoon with Music Worcester’s second annual Cantatathon, as Worcester Bach Collective ensembles and regional partners perform a selection of cantatas. Participating ensembles include the First Baptist Church Choir (directed by

Wesley Hall), Salisbury Singers (Reagan Paras), the Worcester Children's Choir (Pamela Mindell), and Voices of Concinnity with Consonare Choral Community (Sarah Kaufold).

Audience members are invited to enjoy birthday cake and champagne during intermission.

Music Worcester has brought internationally acclaimed musicians and ensembles to Central Massachusetts since its founding in 1858. Today, the organization presents leading orchestras, soloists, and ensembles spanning classical, jazz, folk, global traditions, and dance, engaging audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

In 2024, Music Worcester launched THE COMPLETE BACH, an 11-year project to present live performances of all J.S. Bach's known works. Music Worcester's education and outreach initiatives include in-school workshops and masterclasses, as well as free and reduced-price tickets. Choral director and educator, Everett McCorvey, follows pianist Simone Dinnerstein, and violinist Vijay Gupta, who have served as the Artist-in-Residence, a that establishes deep community relationships with an individual artist.

Music Worcester presents Bach's Birthday Bash Weekend at Worcester's historic Mechanics Hall, 321 Main Street, Worcester, MA. Tickets and information can be found at [musicworchester.org](https://musicworchester.org)

Friday, March 20 at 8 pm The Sebastians - The Brandenburg Concertos

Saturday, March 21 at 4 pm Keyboards up Close

Saturday, March 21 at 8 pm Worcester Chamber Music Society - Musical Offering, Italian Concerto, and Toccata in F sharp minor

Sunday, March 22 at 4 pm Cantatathon 2026.

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