

Music Worcester Launches Year 3 of THE COMPLETE BACH with BACHtoberfest Oct. 23-25

Celebrated Musicians Emi Ferguson, Kit Armstrong, and Boris Giltburg Anchor a Five-Concert Weekend of Bach

WORCESTER, MA, UNITED STATES, August 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [THE COMPLETE BACH](#) (TCB), [Music Worcester](#)'s 11-year initiative to present live performances of all the works of Johann Sebastian Bach, holds its third annual BACHtoberfest Weekend, October 23-25. This five-concert weekend was programmed by TCB's Artistic Director Chris Shepard and will be anchored by celebrated flutist Emi Ferguson and keyboardist Kit Armstrong playing the Flute Sonatas on Friday night, and internationally renowned pianist Boris Giltburg performing The Well Tempered Clavier, Book 1 on Saturday. Full information and ticket details are available at musicworchester.org.



Artistic Director Chris Shepard conducting the BACHtoberfest Choir

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Chris Shepard, Artistic Director

This festival weekend begins on Friday, October 23 at WAMS Works, as Emi Ferguson and Kit Armstrong perform J.S. Bach's Flute Sonatas (BWV 120 and 130-132), as well as two by his son, C.P.E. Bach; Sonata in C Major and Sonata in G Major.

Emi Ferguson returns to Music Worcester after performing with Ruckus in summer 2025. A 2023 recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, Ferguson is a flute player, singer, composer, arranger, radio host, and writer. As a performer, she appears as a soloist and collaborator at major festivals and concert halls around the world. She is

the host of WQXR's Young Musician Showcase, is principal flute for the Handel & Haydn Society, and frequently performs with AMOC*, the New York New Music Ensemble, and Ruckus among others. She will be joined by Kit Armstrong on the harpsichord. Since entering the global music stage twenty years ago, Armstrong has performed recitals in major series, appearing with the world's finest orchestras and has developed close artistic partnerships with leading instrumentalists and vocalists around the world.

Saturday afternoon, October 24
CONCORA (Connecticut Choral Arts), under the direction of Shepard, will sing three of Bach's choral cantatas at WAMS Works including Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden (BWV 6), Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot (BWV 39), and Herr, wie du willst, so schick's mit mir (BWV 73)

Saturday evening at Assumption University's Curtis Hall, internationally renowned pianist Boris Giltburg makes his Massachusetts debut playing The

Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1. This near-meditative journey through every key signature, each with two movements (Prelude and Fugue) allows the listener to experience Bach's keyboard writing as he intended: musical practices to explore all ways of writing.

Giltburg is a Moscow-born Israeli pianist who won his first international competition at age 13 and has since gone on to win other competitions and play with some of the world's leading orchestras and in the finest concert halls. He is lauded for his combination of poetic imagination and analytical insight – qualities that have driven his in-depth explorations of major composers including Rachmaninov, Beethoven and Ravel. He will release a recording of The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1 on Naxos in May 2027.

"One of the most exciting aspects of this year's BACHtoberfest is that all three guest artists come from the rising generation of leading Bach performers," said Shepard. "This is especially significant because they 'came of musical age' after the battles between period performers and



Flutist Emi Ferguson



Pianist Boris Giltburg

traditional instrumentalists had largely subsided. As a result, Emi Ferguson, Kit Armstrong, and Boris Giltburg either move effortlessly between the two worlds or have found creative, well-informed ways to bring the two traditions together.”

Audiences are invited to join the free Music Sunday service as the First Church Unitarian Choir will sing Bach’s cantata *Was mein Gott will, das g’scheh allzeit*, (BWV 111), spotlighting the gorgeous acoustics of the sanctuary.

Sunday afternoon the BACHtoberfest Choir, along with members of the Hartford Chorale gather under Shepard’s baton in Mechanics Hall for the third-annual performance to conclude the 2026 BACHtoberfest Weekend. The BACHtoberfest Choir is composed of individual singers from across the region and country who assemble for this concert, rehearsing a series of J.S. Bach’s cantatas together over the course of the weekend prior to this culminating event.

THE COMPLETE BACH continues throughout Music Worcester’s 2026-2027 season with five concerts on Bach’s Birthday Bash Weekend March 20-22, along with a 300th anniversary performance of *St. Matthew Passion* April 11, and *Clavier Ubung III*, considered Bach’s greatest work for organ, April 25.

In the first 2 years of TCB, Music Worcester has already presented live performances of almost a fifth of Bach’s prodigious output.

THE COMPLETE BACH is Music Worcester’s audacious decade-plus-long project to present all of the known works of J. S. Bach, ending on March 21, 2035—the 350th anniversary of the Baroque master’s birth. The project launched in 2024, and each season features a dozen concerts with music from each genre of Bach’s immense body of work.

Music Worcester is partnering with regional music partners, such as Handel & Haydn Society and Baroklyn; world-renowned musicians, including Jeremy Denk, Simone Dinnerstein, Vijay Gupta, and Zlatomir Fung; and members of the Worcester Bach Collective (a wide range of musical organizations in Worcester), in what is believed to be the first project to present live performances of all of J.S. Bach’s works since his own lifetime.

In addition to presenting Bach’s work on stage, THE COMPLETE BACH also has an online component: three different podcast series designed to help listeners get to know the man and his music.

Music Worcester

Founded in 1858, Music Worcester continues its long tradition of presenting internationally acclaimed artists and ensembles to Central Massachusetts, with programming that spans classical, jazz, global traditions, and dance.

Music Worcester’s education and community engagement initiatives include in-school

workshops, masterclasses, and free and reduced-price ticket programs. This season, in addition to historic Mechanics Hall, Music Worcester will present concerts in The Hanover Theatre, JMAC's BrickBox, WAMS Works, Tuckerman Hall, Assumption University's Curtis Hall, Trinity Lutheran Church, First Unitarian Church, and Doherty Memorial High School.

In 2026–2027, Everett McCorvey continues his Artist-in-Residency, following past residents Simone Dinnerstein and Vijay Gupta, as part of the organization's biannual residency program focused on deep and lasting community connection.

Tickets and information for THE COMPLETE BACH and all Music Worcester programs, can be found at musicworchester.org

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