

# EMMANUEL MUSE



*Bach: A Signature Season*  
*Johann Sebastian Bach.*

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## *Emmanuel Music's Bach Signature Season: The Art of Fugue*

Emmanuel Music's 2007-08 Bach Signature Season switches into an intimate chamber mode on Wednesday evening, October 10. But there will also be a buzz of excitement, as history is made once again by this 37-year-old arts organization.

Top pianists—a baker's dozen of them from Boston and beyond—will share the spotlight in Bach's *The Art of Fugue*. The Emmanuel Music concert will find these pianists bringing their own interpretative genius to the individual fugues that they play. Each fugue is a complex, textural piece of music that weaves a variety of voices together.

*The Art of Fugue* promises to provide another unforgettable Emmanuel Music night, since this complex, mysterious and infrequently performed study of fugal counterpoint has fascinated scholars, historians, performers and audiences for nearly 260 years. Bach worked on the piece for more than a decade, probably from the late 1730s to his death in 1750, and it was published the following year. Its formal title is *Die Kunst der Fuge*, BWV 1080. As a youth, Bach had already started experimenting with the fugal form, and *The Art of Fugue* stands as the pinnacle of his keyboard genius.

Craig Smith, Emmanuel Music Conductor and Artistic Director, is the creative force behind *The Art of Fugue* concert. Among the pianists are John Harbison, distinguished composer and Emmanuel Music Principal Guest Conductor; Robert Levin, a performer known around the globe; and Emmanuel Music regulars, husband and wife, Randall Hodgkinson and Leslie Amper.

Other familiar musicians who have participated in Emmanuel Music Chamber Series and other collaborations over the years will be on hand, along with some exciting new pianists. Details appear below. It is certain to be remembered as the ultimate Emmanuel Music collaboration.

While it's somewhat unclear whether Bach intended *The Art of Fugue* as a scholarly exercise or a performance piece, there's no doubt that it offers enormous latitude for individual artistic interpretation. *The Art of Fugue* can be played on the piano, harpsichord and organ, as well as by other instruments and ensembles.

"Bach left no specific instructions for its performance, but an advertisement that appeared in 1751 indicated that the published *The Art of Fugue* was composed for the harpsichord or organ," Smith explains. "In any case, all but two sections—the finale of Contrapunctus VI and the two mirror fugues of Contrapunctus XII and XIII—can be played by two hands.

Smith emphasizes that the concert will appeal to all lovers of Bach, not only musicologists and composers.

"You don't need to have an advanced degree in composition to appreciate the structure and melody of the multiple parts in *The Art of Fugue*, plus the interpretation of individual fugues by the soloists. Bach was the ultimate teacher, as well as the ultimate composer. In his biography, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, Christoph Wolff describes him as 'one of the most active, dedicated, and prolific teachers the world has ever seen.'"

In short, concertgoers will not want to miss this landmark event in Emmanuel Music history. A complete list of musicians appears below.

### **Leslie Amper**

Recipient of the NEA Solo Recitalist Fellowship Grant. Perennial favorite in Emmanuel Music's Chamber Series, including multi-year marathons of Schubert, Harbison and Schumann works. Has performed all over the United States. Faculty member, Longy School of Music and New England Conservatory.

### **Bruce Brubaker**

Named Young Musician of the Year by *Musical America*. Long-time Juilliard faculty member. Chair of the Piano Faculty at New England Conservatory. Described as "a visionary virtuoso" and "an artistic provocateur" who has performed in such locations as Hollywood, New York, Paris and Hong Kong.

### **Katherine Chi**

One of Canada's fastest-rising classical music stars. At age 9, she gave her debut recital and was accepted for study at The Curtis Institute of Music the following year. She was a prize-winner at the 1998 Busoni International Piano Competition and became the first Canadian and first woman to win Canada's Honens International Piano Competition.

### **Ya-Fei Chuang**

Featured performer with the Bach Festival Leipzig, Beethoven Festival (Warsaw) and the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig, plus numerous other venues in the USA, Europe, South America and Asia. Faculty member at Boston Conservatory; also teaches master classes at Tanglewood and the Mozarteum in Salzburg.

### **Judith Gordon**

After making her New York-recital debut at the Metropolitan Museum of Art Introduction series, she went on to earn the title "Boston Musician of the Year" from the *Boston Globe* in 1996. In addition to Emmanuel Music, she has performed with the Boston Pops and accompanied innumerable vocal and instrumental soloists. Co-Artistic Director, Music from Salem (New York). Faculty member at Smith College.

### **John Harbison**

Prolific composer. Works include four string quartets, four symphonies, a cantata, and three operas. Won Pulitzer Prize in 1987 for *The Flight into Egypt*, his opera *The Great Gatsby* was commissioned by and performed at the Metropolitan Opera. Institute Professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Principal Guest Conductor, Emmanuel Music. Artistic Director, Token Creek Music Festival, Wisconsin. Recipient of numerous music and arts awards.

### **Randall Hodgkinson**

Grand Prize Winner of the International American Music Competition, sponsored by Carnegie Hall and the Rockefeller Foundation. He presented the world premier of the *Piano Concerto* by Gardner Read at the Eastman School. His numerous recital programs have spanned the repertoire from J. S. Bach to Donald Martino. Faculty member, New England Conservatory of Music and the Longy School of Music.

### **Michael Lewin**

Appears as a soloist with orchestras including the Netherlands Philharmonic, Cairo Symphony, Bucharest Philharmonic, Boston Pops, Youth Orchestra of the Americas, and the Phoenix, Indianapolis, North Carolina, New Orleans, Colorado, and Athens Symphonies. His highly-praised recordings range from the complete

piano music of Charles Tomlinson Griffes to Scarlatti Sonatas. Chairman of the Boston Conservatory Piano Faculty and member of the Lewin-Muresanu Duo.

### **Robert Levin**

Performs all over the world with such orchestra conductors as James Conlon, Bernard Haitink, Sir Neville Marriner, Seiji Ozawa, Sir Simon Rattle, Helmuth Rilling and Joseph Silverstein. Also, plays period pianos with Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Christopher Hogwood, Sir Charles Mackerras, Nicholas McGeegan, and Sir Roger Norrington. Artistic Director and long-time faculty member at the Sarasota Music Festival. President of the International Johann Sebastian Bach Piano Competition in Leipzig, Germany.

### **Robert Merfeld**

Founding member of the Apple Hill Chamber Players, with whom he toured nationally and internationally for more than 20 years. Has collaborated with violinists and vocalists all over the United States, and played with many orchestras and festivals as far away as Bolivia and Costa Rica. Teaches on the piano and chamber music faculties of Boston University, Harvard University, and the Longy School of Music.

### **Sally Pinkas**

Soloist who also performs as half of the Hirsch-Pinkas Piano Duo (with her husband Evan Hirsch). Professor of Music and Artist in Residence at Dartmouth College and faculty member at Longy School of Music. Participant in the Marlboro, Tanglewood and Aspen Music Festivals. A native of Israel, she has played recitals all over the globe, including Rome, Jerusalem, Washington and Boston.

### **Sergey Schepkin**

His recording of Bach's Partitas acclaimed by *Fanfare* magazine; his recording of the First Book of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* praised by International Piano as "one of the best ever made." Associate Professor of Piano, Carnegie Mellon University. Studied with Grigory Sokolov in St. Petersburg, Russia, and with Russell Sherman at New England Conservatory.

### **Yehudi Wyner**

American composer, pianist, conductor, and music educator. Recipient, 2006 Pulitzer Prize for Music for his Piano Concerto *Chiavi in Mano*. Has taught at Hofstra, Hebrew Union College, Yale, SUNY Purchase, Cornell, Brandeis, Harvard, Duke and the Tanglewood Music Center. His musical genres also include Jewish liturgical compositions, *Friday Evening Service* (1963) for cantor and chorus, and *On This Most Voluptuous Night* (1982) for soprano and chamber ensemble. Recipient, Elise Stoeger Award from the Lincoln Center Chamber

Music Society.

*The Art of Fugue* performance will begin at 7:30 at Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston, where Emmanuel Music is the Ensemble-in-Residence. To order tickets, visit [www.emmanuelmusic.org](http://www.emmanuelmusic.org) or call 617-536-3356. Tickets will also be available at the door on the evening of the performance.

Emmanuel Church is easy to reach via public transportation. Take the Green Line to Arlington Street; then walk one block to Newbury Street.

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