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Carmel Bach Festival 89th Season Announces its Chamber Concert Lineup

20+ chamber programs on "the nature of sound": from Bach by candlelight to Conrad Tao's *Counterpoint*

July 11-25, 2026 | Carmel-by-the-Sea, California

(Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA) **—** The Carmel Bach Festival (CBF) is delighted to return for its 89th season, running July 11-25, 2026, in beautiful Carmel-by-the-Sea, California. This season, the festival will explore the theme of "the nature of sound" performing in some of Carmel's most beautiful venues like the Sunset Center Theater, Carmel Mission Basilica, and the Church in the Forest in Pebble Beach. In addition to the already announced Main concerts this year, the musicians of the festival orchestra have curated an exhilarating lineup of more than 20 chamber concerts for the 2026 season, including a chamber program curated by the festival's Featured Composer – Puerto-Rican born composer Angélica Negrón.

The 2026 Carmel Bach Festival will unfold across two unforgettable weeks, spanning four centuries of music in settings as luminous as the works themselves. As part of the chamber lineup, counter-tenor Reginald Mobley opens the season with a pre-festival recital, and from there the chamber series ranges from candlelit Bach cantatas at All Saints' to an intimate performance featuring mandolin masters Mike Marshall and Caterina Lichtenberg at the storied Henry Miller Memorial library. Audiences can slip into 18th-century Paris, the surreal Roaring '20s, the politically charged world of Banned & Blacklisted composers, and a Bird Gallery filled with Vivaldi and Handel. As a special event this summer, Conrad Tao and Caleb Teicher will reimagine Bach and Gershwin in Counterpoint.

In addition to the chamber concerts below, CBF will offer its annual **Foyer Concert series** which will feature the music of John Dowland, a concert of works for 19th century guitar, copious selections of Bach, and much more. Each performance will take place in the Sunset Center Theater Foyer Monday through Friday at 1:30PM throughout the festival.

Tickets for all festival performances are now on sale at www.BachFestival.org.

2026 Carmel Bach Festival Chamber Concerts

PRE-FEST: Reginald Mobley Recital
Reginald Mobley, counter-tenor
DATE/TIME: Monday, July 6, 2026 - 7:30 pm
LOCATION: All Saints Episcopal Church (Dolores St & 9th Ave, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase here**

Counter-tenor Reginald Mobley appears in this special pre-festival recital. His acclaimed recent album, Because, has received wide attention for its exploration of spirituals, identity, and personal history, connecting this repertoire with Baroque performance practice.

Mobley is recognized for his work in both early music and spirituals, and for his clear tone, musical intelligence, and strong communication with his audiences. This recital provides a compelling opportunity to hear one of today's most distinctive counter-tenor voices in an intimate, pre-festival setting.

PRE-FEST: Classical Cabaret
DATE/TIME: Wednesday, July 8, 2026 - 7:30 pm
LOCATION: Sunset Center Studio (San Carlos St at 9th Ave, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase here**

Classical Cabaret is an intimate, cabaret-inspired evening hosted by longtime Festival orchestra member, Jesse Barrett, in Studio 105. With an open bar and a relaxed, nightclub-style atmosphere, guests will enjoy classical favorites presented in fresh, full-of-personality ways.

Music of Earth and Elysium - Candlelight Concert
In Memory of Allen Whear
DATE/TIME: Sunday, July 12, 2026, 8:00 pm & Sunday, July 19, 2026 at 8:00 pm
LOCATION: All Saints Episcopal Church (Dolores St & 9th Ave, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: Purchase here

KARL DITTERS VON DITTERSDORF: String Quartet No. 1 in D major, K.191
FANNY MENDELSSOHN HENSEL: Selections from *Das Jahr*
ANGÉLICA NEGRÓN: *Lo infinito*
FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN: String Quartet in C major, Op. 33 No. 3, Hob. III:39 "The Bird"

This candlelit string quartet concert explores musical depictions of nature, from sunrise and weather to birdsong and the infinite, with works by Dittersdorf, Fanny Mendelssohn, Angélica Negrón, and Haydn.

Curated by: Patrick Jordan

All Bach Organ Recital
DATE/TIME: Monday, July 13, 2026, 11:00 am & Monday, July 20, 2026 at 11:00 am
LOCATION: Carmel Mission Basilica (3080 Rio Road, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase here**

PROGRAM:
Enjoy a morning of organ music in the historic Carmel Mission Basilica. Performed by Andrew Arthur, the Festival's Principal Organist and a member of the Artistic Leadership Team, this recital highlights the beauty of Bach's works as well as works by Heinrich Scheidemann & Georg Böhm.

Curated by: Andrew Arthur

July in Paris
DATE/TIME: Monday, July 13, 2026, 3:00 pm & Monday, July 20, 2026 at 3:00 pm
LOCATION: All Saints' Episcopal Church (Dolores St & 9th Ave, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase here**

FRANÇOIS COUPERIN: "Sonade" from *Les Nations: La Françoise*
JEAN-FÉRY REBEL: No. 1 in A major
FRANÇOIS COUPERIN: Concerts royaux No. 1 in G major
JEAN-FÉRY REBEL: Musette
FRANÇOIS COUPERIN: Dance Suite from *Les Nations: La Françoise*

Step into Paris at the turn of the 18th century, when candlelit salons and royal courts were filled with elegant, expressive music. Works by François Couperin and Jean-Féry Rebel capture the refined beauty, rich harmonies, and vivid character of the French Baroque, offering a glimpse into the sound world of the city alive with new musical ideas.

Curated by: Stephen Schultz

Roaring 20's
DATE/TIME: Tuesday, July 14, 2026, 3:00 pm & Tuesday, July 21, 2026 at 3:00 pm
LOCATION: All Saints' Episcopal Church (Dolores St & 9th Ave, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase here**

FRANCIS POULENC: *Le bal masqué* (Cantate profane sur des poèmes de Max Jacob)
BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ: *La revue de cuisine*
IGOR STRAVINSKY: Octet for Wind Instruments

The 1920s marked a decade of bold reinvention as composers responded to a rapidly changing world with wit, clarity, and new musical languages. Works by Poulenc, Martinů, and Stravinsky capture the energy of the era—from Parisian surrealism and jazz-inflected dance to the crisp lines of neoclassicism—revealing three distinct voices shaped by the same moment in history.

Curated by: Leonard Ott

Forest Quartets
DATE/TIME: Wednesday, July 15, 2026, 5:00 pm & Wednesday, July 22, 2026 at 5:00 pm
LOCATION: Church in the Forest (3152 Forest Lake Rd, Pebble Beach, CA 93953, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase here**

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: String Quartet No. 10 in E-flat major, Op. 74, "Harp"
FELIX MENDELSSOHN: String Quartet No. 1 in E-flat major, Op. 12

Held at Church in the Forest, a striking venue nestled among the cypress and pine trees of Pebble Beach, this concert features two landmark string quartets: Beethoven's String Quartet No. 10, the "Harp," and Mendelssohn's String Quartet No. 1, a work that balances classical structure with Romantic intensity.

Curated by: Peter Hanson

Birdsongs
DATE/TIME: Thursday, July 16, 2026, 5:00 pm
LOCATION: Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History (165 Forest Ave, Pacific Grove, CA 93950, US)
TICKETS: *This concert is currently sold out*

Held at the Bird Gallery at the P.G. Natural History Museum, this program pairs music inspired by birds with a setting devoted to their beauty and sound. Vivaldi's Flute Concerto "Il Gardellino" (The Goldfinch) and Handel's aria "Sweet Bird" echo the delicate contours of birdsong, while Biber's Sonata representativa and Schmelzer's Sonata "Cucù" translate animal voices into playful musical gesture. In this setting, music becomes both a reflection and extension of the natural world around it.

Curated by: Greg Smith

Bach Cantatas
Clara Rottsolk, soprano
Reginald Mobley, counter-tenor
Thomas Cooley, tenor
Jesse Blumberg, baritone
DATE/TIME: Friday, July 17, 2026, 3:00 pm & Friday, July 24, 2026, 3:00 pm
LOCATION: All Saints' Episcopal Church (Dolores St & 9th Ave, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase here**

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH: Cantata No. 7, “Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam,” BWV 7
JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH: Cantata No. 187, “Es wartet alles auf dich,” BWV 187

Bach Cantatas features two expressive works by J.S. Bach—Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam, BWV 7, and Cantata BWV 187. Rich in theological depth and musical invention, these cantatas showcase Bach’s gift for illuminating text through vibrant choral writing and nuanced instrumental color.

Curated by: Andrew Arthur

Mike Marshall & Caterina Lichtenberg at the Henry Miller Memorial Library
DATE/TIME: Saturday, July 18, 2026, 12:00 pm
LOCATION: Henry Miller Memorial Library (48601 California 1, Big Sur, CA 93920, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase Here**

Mike Marshall and Caterina Lichtenberg are two of the most compelling voices in the world of mandolin. The two have redefined what the instrument can do and create music that is intricate yet playful, moving effortlessly between classical repertoire, folk traditions, and their own inventive arrangements. There may be no better place to experience it than Henry Miller Memorial Library. Hidden among the redwoods, this beloved Big Sur venue has built a reputation for unforgettable, close-up performances. Arcade Fire, Father John Misty, Fleet Foxes, Patti Smith, Philip Glass, and more have all stepped into this singular space.

Banned & Blacklisted

DATE/TIME: Saturday, July 18, 2026, 3:00 pm
LOCATION: Sunset Center Theater Stage (San Carlos St at 9th Ave, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: *This concert is currently sold out*

This concert explores music that was banned, blacklisted, or shaped by political pressure, from Shostakovich and Mendelssohn to Copland, Weill, and Stravinsky. The program highlights the power of music to resist, respond to, and endure through oppression across time and place.
This performance takes place on the Sunset Center stage, with the audience seated where the orchestra normally sits, offering a shifted perspective that quietly echoes the program's focus on voice, viewpoint, and the forces that shape how music is heard.

Curated by: Greg Smith

Field of Sound, curated by Featured Composer Angélica Negrón
DATE/TIME: Thursday, July 23, 2026, 3:30 pm
LOCATION: Sunset Center Studio 105 (San Carlos St at 9th Ave, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase Here**

ANNIKA SOCOLOFSKY: *Like a Diamond*
DANIEL WOHL: *Disappearance*
PAULINE OLIVEROS: *Environmental Dialogues*
ANDREW YEE: *The Trees of Greenwood*
PHONG TRAN: *Flocking*
CHRISTIAN QUIÑONES: *My Voice is a Broken Chorus*
THOMAS DARIAN DONOVAN: *Wings*
ANGÉLICA NEGRÓN: *Pedazos intermitentes de un lugar ya fragmentado*

Curated by festival featured composer Angélica Negrón in line with the Festival's theme, this program focuses on the nature of sound itself. The program unfolds as an immersive experience— blurring boundaries between acoustic and electronic sound, individual and collective voice, memory and environment. The use of strings, voices, and electronics reflects Negrón's broader work, where sound is treated as a flexible material shaped by space, texture, and listening.

Twilight in the Cathedral
DATE/TIME: Thursday, July 23, 2026, 5:00 pm
LOCATION: San Carlos Cathedral (500 Church St, Monterey, CA 93940, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase Here**

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL: Organ Concerto in G minor, Op. 4, No. 1, HWV 289
JOHANN ROSENMÜLLER: Sonata seconda à 2 in E minor
HENRY PURCELL: *Three parts upon a Ground in D*
JOHANN HEINRICH SCHMELZER: Sonata seconda in D minor
GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL: Organ Concerto in F major, HWV 295, "The Cuckoo & the Nightingale"

Experience the serene beauty of Twilight in the Cathedral, a concert that evokes the tranquility of a sacred evening in the historic San Carlos Cathedral. This annual concert highlights Baroque music for strings and organ.

Curated by: Andrew Arthur

Counterpoint
DATE/TIME: Saturday, July 25, 2026, 3:00 pm
LOCATION: Sunset Center Theater (San Carlos St at 9th Ave, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921, US)
TICKETS: **Purchase Here**

Counterpoint is a collaboration between pianist and composer Conrad Tao and choreographer and dancer Caleb Teicher. The duo explore the dichotomy of their different perspectives and artistic practices, expanding their individual expressive capacity through a collective experience. Harmonic, rhythmic, and theatrical counterpoint between the artists seeks to map out constellations linking their disparate traditions, driving the imagination and opening the heart. The stylistically diverse music of Counterpoint includes the Aria from Bach's Goldberg Variations, Art Tatum's demented stride piano, Arnold Schoenberg's ironic take on the Viennese waltz, a delicate miniature from Tao and Teicher's More Forever, and threading it all together, a work that bridges traditions, approaches, and styles—Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue.

ABOUT THE CARMEL BACH FESTIVAL

The Carmel Bach Festival (CBF) began in 1935 as a four-day series of concerts at the Sunset School Auditorium and the Carmel Mission Basilica. Over the years, it grew to a

two-week celebration of concerts, recitals, master classes, lectures, and open rehearsals in July. The Festival's mission is to celebrate the works, inspiration, and ongoing influence of Johann Sebastian Bach worldwide by immersing audiences in a festival experience integrating music, education and ideas. Under the leadership of Artistic Director and Principal Conductor Grete Pedersen and Executive Director Nathan Lutz, the organization offers innovative artistic programming.

Our Mission is to celebrate the works, inspiration, and ongoing influence of J.S.Bach worldwide by immersing audiences in a festival experience integrating music, education and ideas, and by meaningful community engagement throughout the year. Our Vision is to be a world-class festival of music and ideas transcending the traditional boundaries of performance and presentation, both at the Festival and in communities, and to provide fresh musical contexts that spark the imagination, stimulate the mind, and enrich people's lives in multi-faceted ways.

https://bachfestival.org/about-us/