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Media Contact:
Kristen Turner/Bucklesweet
kristen@bucklesweet.com

Carmel Bach Festival Announces 89th Season

July 11-25, 2026

Angélica Negrón announced as Featured Composer

July 11-25, 2025 | Carmel-by-the-Sea, California

(Carmel, CA) **—** The Carmel Bach Festival (CBF) announces 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. The Main Concerts will include performances of Bach's Cantata No. 214, Kaija Saariaho's *Nuits, adieux* , Beethoven Symphony No. 6, and more. Also, this year the festival will collaborate with a Featured Composer – Puerto-Rican born composer Angélica Negrón. Subscription packages for the festival will go on sale on March 16, 2026, at www.BachFestival.org.

"Our theme, the nature of sound, invites us to listen more deeply," said **CBF Artistic Director Grete Pedersen**, "…not only to music, but to the world around us. Carmel offers this in abundance: the Pacific Ocean waves, the wind in the cypress trees, the stillness of the evening. And…the cars, the coffee making, and people chatting. All of it becomes part of the festival's soundscape."

"This year, we are excited to dive into the roots of the Carmel Bach Festival and present programs that look to both the past and the present," said **CBF Executive Director Nathan Lutz.** "As we continue to dig deeper into the festival's history, we are reminded that CBF was born in 1935, in a Carmel-by-the-Sea defined by artistic freedom, curiosity, and experimentation. The founders, Hazel Watrous and Dene Denny, embraced modern music wholeheartedly, nurturing a creative haven where new works thrived alongside the music of Bach, where composers, writers, and artists lived and worked side by side. The 2026 season reflects that original spirit of Carmel, placing early music in conversation with contemporary voices, and inviting audiences into the same sense of discovery that shaped the festival from the very beginning."

The Carmel Bach Festival's 2026 Main Concerts celebrate music inspired by nature, bringing together beloved masterworks and striking contemporary voices across two weeks of performances. From the radiant drama of **Haydn's *The Seasons***, the elemental power of **Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*** and **Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony**, to the grandeur of **Handel's *Water Music*** and the timeless wisdom of **Bach's cantatas**, the season offers an immersive journey through sound and story. Conductors **Grete Pedersen**, **Andrew Megill**, and **Peter Hanson** lead the Festival Orchestra and Chorale, while modern works by **Angélica Negrón, Kaija Saariaho, Nils Henrik Asheim,** and **Einojuhani Rautavaara,** among others bring fresh perspective and color. Also, this season, CBF looks forward to welcoming five vocal soloists for several of their 2026 concerts: Clara Rottsolk, soprano; Thomas Cooley, tenor; Reginald Mobley, countertenor; Jesse Blumberg, baritone; and Edward Nelson, baritone.

For the 2026 season, the Carmel Bach Festival has named **Angélica Negrón** as the festival's **Featured Composer**, with several of her works appearing throughout the season, including a program personally curated by her. Negrón is known for combining classical and electronic music, unusual instruments, and found sounds. Her works often draw inspiration from nature, as in *Marejada*, featured on the Friday Main Concert, which incorporates original recordings of waves and birds from the beaches of Puerto Rico. Her music reflects the festival's founding spirit of curiosity and experimentation and highlights the festival's theme: "the nature of sound."

Reflecting on the new collaboration, **Angélica Negrón stated**: “I’m beyond thrilled to explore how nature, science, technology, acoustics, field recordings, and music intersect with human connection, curiosity, and perception through shared listening with the wonderful Carmel Bach Festival community.”

Angélica Negrón, is known for playing with the unexpected intersection of classical and electronic music, unusual instruments, and found sounds. She has had works commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, New York Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Kronos Quartet, Roomful of Teeth, and more. Her original scores include the HBO docuseries *Menudo: Forever Young* and *You Were My First Boyfriend* directed by Cecilia Aldarondo. She regularly performs a solo show and is a founding member of the tropical electronic band Balún. And recently, Negrón contributed arrangements to recording artist Rosalia’s newest album *Lux*, called an “exquisite oratorio for the messy heart” by *Pitchfork*.

MAIN CONCERTS

Haydn The Seasons
July 11 & 18, 2026 at 7:30 PM
Sunset Center Theater

Grete Pedersen, conductor
Clara Rottsolk, soprano
Thomas Cooley, tenor
Edward Nelson, baritone
Festival Orchestra
Festival Chorale

HAYDN: *The Seasons*
NILS HENRIK ASHEIM: *Muohta – Language of Snow*

Bach & Rebel
July 12 & 19, 2026 at 3:00 PM
Sunset Center Theater

Grete Pedersen, conductor
Clara Rottsolk, soprano
Reginald Mobley, countertenor
Thomas Cooley, tenor
Jesse Blumberg, baritone
Festival Orchestra
Festival Chorale

PURCELL: *Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary*
REBEL: *Les Élémens*
KAIJA SAARIAHO: *Nuits, Adieux*
SVEN-DAVID SANDSTRÖM/PURCELL ARR.: *Hear My Prayer, O Lord*
BACH: Cantata No. 214

Vivaldi Four Seasons & Handel Water Music
July 13 & 20, 2026 at 7:30 PM
Sunset Center Theater

Peter Hanson, conductor & violin
Festival Orchestra

VIVALDI: *The Four Seasons*
HANDEL: *Water Music*

Bach at Sunset
July 14 & 21, 2026 at 7:30 PM
Sunset Center Theater

Andrew Megill, conductor
Clara Rottsolk, soprano
Reginald Mobley, countertenor
Thomas Cooley, tenor
Jesse Blumberg, baritone
Festival Orchestra
Festival Choral

J.S. BACH: Cantata No. 39, “Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot”
J.S. BACH: Cantata No. 105, “Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht”
ANTONIO LOTTI: *Missa Sapientiae*

Nature’s Poet
July 15 & 22 at 8:30 PM
Carmel Mission Basilica

Andrew Megill, conductor
Festival Chorale

RAMONA LUENGEN: *In tiefsten Nächten*
FRANK MARTIN: Mass for Double Choir
HINDEMITH: *Six Chansons*

EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA: *Die erste Elegie*
STEPHEN ANDREW TAYLOR: *Only Yes*

Bach, Brazilian, and Bluegrass
July 16 & 23 at 7:30 PM
Sunset Center Theater

Edwin Huizinga, violin
William Coulter, guitar
Mike Marshall, mandolin
Caterina Lichtenberg, mandolin
Festival Orchestra

Program to be announced

Beethoven 6 Symphony & Appalachian Spring
July 17 & 24 at 7:30 PM
Sunset Theater Center

Grete Pedersen, conductor
Clara Rottsolk, soprano
Festival Orchestra

ANGÉLICA NEGRÓN: *Marejada*
COPLAND: *Appalachian Spring*
BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 6, "Pastoral"

Special Event

Counterpoint
July 25 at 3:00 PM
Sunset Center Theater

Conrad Tao, pianist & composer
Caleb Teicher, dancer & choreographer

The duo explore the dichotomy of their different perspectives and artistic practices, expanding their individual expressive capacity through a collective experience. 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—Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Additional Chamber Concerts & Free Community Events

A hallmark of every Carmel Bach Festival season, the musicians of the festival orchestra have curated an inviting and exhilarating lineup of chamber concerts in 2026. This year's chamber and free community events will take place in iconic venues like the gorgeous Church in the Forest in Pebble Beach, the historic Henry Miller Memorial library in Big Sur, one of the oldest Cathedral's in the U.S., the San Carlos Cathedral in Monterey, and much more.

**Additional programming and guest artists to be announced in spring 2026.*

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/