

NEDERLANDSE
BACH
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VERENIGING



**BACH
FOR ALL**

Policy plan
2021-2024

Stichting de Nederlandse Bachvereniging

Mission, Vision, Profile

“I feel these people are so talented and educated in their art, they make Bach so accessible to the world.” These words, from a fan¹ of one of our YouTube videos, are the biggest compliment we could imagine. Making Bach accessible to as many people as possible is what we put our heart and soul into, also in the second century of the Netherlands Bach Society, which starts in 2021.

Mission

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) is probably the most ‘inclusive’ composer we know. Everyone can go to him: from amateur to virtuoso, and from choir singer to jazz musician, whether highly educated or not, and whether religious or not – Bach is there for everyone. In his music, people find inspiration, emotion, comfort and reflection. In a hectic world, Bach’s music is a refuge and a constant factor for each generation. That is why ‘Bach for All’ is our mission.

Vision

The Netherlands Bach Society sees itself as the custodian of musical cultural heritage and as being responsible for keeping the early music genre alive and relevant. It fulfils this task on the basis of the vision that for many people music is not a luxury, but one of the *necessities of life*. Through our performances, we create value that cannot be expressed in economic terms (or only to a limited extent): music enriches life in an immaterial sense. Our interaction with music must be meaningful, have impact and continue to tie in with the environment of our current and future audiences.

Artistic profile

Founded in 1921 to perform Bach’s *St Matthew Passion* in the Grote Kerk Naarden, the Netherlands Bach Society has grown over the past century into a leading vocal-instrumental ensemble of international significance. We research and present the work of J.S.Bach and his contemporaries and kindred spirits, and hand it down from generation to generation. The Bach Society plays music in accordance with the principles of ‘historically informed performance practice’, meaning that we perform on instruments that do justice to the period in which they were played (i.e. old instruments or copies of them) and that we delve into the context in which our repertoire was created. We do so within a broad context and taking account of the times we live in today.

¹ Vallie MacKrell in a YouTube comment on *Orchestral Suite No.3, BWV 1068*

The appointment of artistic director Shunske Sato in 2018 ushered in a new artistic chapter for the Bach Society. The principles of our DNA, however, are fixed: we shed new light on age-old scores through an open, curious and investigative attitude, and do not shy away from experiment. Shunske Sato believes there is not just one way of doing justice to all the aspects of Bach's music. On the contrary, there are countless possibilities. The Bach Society's goal is to explore these possibilities and present them to audiences: a quest without end, which we want to share with as many people as possible.

Positioning within the Dutch culture

The Netherlands Bach Society occupies a unique position in the Dutch ensemble culture. It is the oldest *vocal-instrumental* ensemble that gives high-quality performances of the repertoire of Bach and his contemporaries on the basis of insights from historically informed performance practice. In addition to the Bach Society's artistic directors, the ensemble works, and has worked, with experts like Gustav Leonhardt, Ton Koopman, Peter Dijkstra, Marcus Creed and Philippe Herreweghe. In the coming seasons, Václav Luks, Leonardo García Alarcón, Hans-Christoph Rademann, René Jacobs and Masato Suzuki will be appearing with the ensemble.

There are two important factors that distinguish the Bach Society from similar organisations.

Firstly, the Bach Society is not formed by or around a single defining artistic director. In its existence of nearly a hundred years, the organisation has seen various artistic directors come and go. Our artistic DNA is anchored within the organisation itself and defines the ensemble more than the musician who leads it.

Secondly, the Bach Society has grown since the 1980's into an authoritative institution that is more than just an ensemble. In this capacity, we bear responsibility for the genre.

Through our comprehensive online project All of Bach, we disseminate cultural heritage, through the Young Bach Fellowship, we provide a platform for a new generation of musicians, and through our education and participation programmes, we aim to involve as many people as possible in our activities. We fulfil these tasks with pleasure and pride.

In the Netherlands at the moment, there are two organisations similar to the Netherlands Bach Society that are active in the field of early music², although these ensembles are purely instrumental. The Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, founded by Frans Brüggen (1934-2014) focuses mainly on the classical and early-Romantic repertoire for larger line-ups, and comes together each season on a project basis to give international tours. Our colleagues at Holland Baroque (artistic directors Tineke and Judith Steenbrink) are characterised by musically daring collaborations, often from other genres, usually bridging the gap between past and present.

² **The Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra & Choir of Ton Koopman give a limited number of concerts, mainly abroad.**

Looking back on the 2017-2020 period: redefining the profile

In 2017, a new and exciting period dawned for the Bach Society. After thirty-five years as artistic director, Jos van Veldhoven announced at the end of 2016 that he wanted to hand on the position. Following his announcement, our business director Jan Van den Bossche also decided to leave, so the board had the opportunity to set up a completely new management, opting for a single director. This double change of leadership, which came into effect in 2018, naturally had consequences for the artistic and business paths taken.

The online video platform All of Bach, which started in 2011 as an anniversary project, dominated the programming, planning and production until 2017. The goal of the project was to put all the works by Bach (1080 BWV numbers) online by the centenary season, performed by the Bach Society and affiliated soloists. Inevitably, this led to certain focus areas – like foreign tours and new artistic partnerships – being pushed into the background. The new leaders were faced with important choices. What kind of ensemble do we want to be? Who do we want to reach and how? What part can All of Bach play in this?

From All of Bach to Bach for All

One of the first decisions was that the Bach Society had to start taking a more outward look. So since the beginning of 2018, we have been moving from *All of Bach* to *Bach for All*. We want to be a true Bach Society, whereby everyone who is interested in our activities or wants to participate in them feels welcome and at home. Setting up the All of Bach channel on YouTube was a symbolic start to this, followed by our new website, in which All of Bach was integrated.

A second important step was that we relinquished the centenary

year of 2022 as the end date for All of Bach. The project is invaluable to the Bach Society and is so interwoven with our mission that it became an inseparable part of us. All of Bach has evolved from an anniversary project into a core activity and become part of our profile. This decision means that the pace at which we perform and record Bach's works has slowed down a bit, thus creating scope for regular programming of works by other composers as well and for making different artistic choices.

NEDERLANDSE



Vivaldi-Dangerous Liaisons in collaboration with Opera2Day, 2019

There were (and are) many artistic highlights in the 2017-2020 period. A selection:

- **Bach's *St Matthew Passion* conducted respectively by Václav Luks, Jos van Veldhoven, Philippe Herreweghe and Leonardo García Alarcón;**
- **Concerts in the series *Pieces of Tomorrow (TivoliVredenburg)* in 2017, 2019 (*St Matthew Passion*) and 2020 (*Christmas Oratorio*);**
- **The operas *Vivaldi - Dangerous Liaisons* (2019) and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* by Monteverdi (2020) in collaboration with Opera2Day;**
- **Large-scale young talent projects like the 'Young Johannes' (Bach: *St John Passion*, 2017) and *Concerto Supergrosso* (2020);**
- **Concerts in Belgium, Germany, Austria and Spain, a tour to Japan and the closing concert of the Bachfest Leipzig (June 2020).**

The 2021-2024 period: the beginning of the Bach Society's second century

The move from All of Bach to Bach for All has consequences for everything we undertake, and demands innovation in various areas. From our programmes to our stage presentations, and from the website to the management structure: everything has been, and will be redeveloped. In order to shape this transition, in 2018-2019 we started a positioning project under the guidance of The Zooooo agency, involving all the departments of the organisation (musicians, staff and management). We took a close look at our DNA and defined our core values, mission and vision, on the basis of which we determined our course for the near future. We look forward to the coming years with enthusiasm and a healthy dose of anticipation.



Programming profile

2021-2024

The principle for our programming is shaped by the fact that the Bach Society is a vocal-instrumental ensemble. Several ‘fixed values’ form the basis for our seasons. In addition, we programme unusual ‘Bach repertoire’, such as the less frequently performed music by Bach (cantatas, motets, concertos and suites), placed in different and exciting contexts.

Opera

The successful co-production *Vivaldi - Dangerous Liaisons* with Opera2Day resulted in a long-term collaboration. Following Monteverdi’s *Poppea* (2020), we will come together in 2022 to develop the ‘opera Bach never wrote’, with the working title *Der Prophet*. To music by Bach and his contemporaries, we are presenting the intriguing life story of Jan van Leyden. This Dutchman became a ‘Christian fundamentalist’, and as a ‘prophet’ founded an Anabaptist community in Münster, which became totally corrupt and grew into a city state under tyrannical rule. This story is a harsh reflection from Christian history of the ‘Islamic State’ in the Middle East. Through participation programmes, we will involve amateur choirs in staging the crowd scenes.

This will be followed in 2024 by *Jesus in India: an alternative Passion*. The Bible mentions nothing about the life of Jesus between the ages of 12 and 29. Some researchers think he may have followed the Silk Road to India, where he came into contact with various thinkers. This alternative life story – whether true or not – can make the affinities between different religions tangible at a time when more emphasis is placed on the differences. Western religious music is performed alongside classical music from India, and Arab and Persian music from along the Silk Road. The project involves choreography by Kalpanarts, a company that aims to reposition Indian dance in today’s society. Together, we will explore ways that the Indian community can participate in the performance.

Alternative Passions

In collaboration with NTR Saturday Matinee, the Bach Society will be performing an ‘alternative Passion’ every year. We are starting in 2021 with the *Brockes Passion* by Bach’s contemporary Reinhard Keiser; a large-scale work that is seldom performed. On the programme for 2022 is *Der Tod Jesu* by Carl Heinrich Graun (1704-1759). Discussions are still underway about 2023 and subsequent years.

St Matthew Passion

In 2021, René Jacobs will introduce the audience to the earliest version of the *St Matthew Passion* (BWV 244.1) – a version that is fundamentally different to the form in which the monumental opus is usually performed. Our hundredth *St Matthew Passion*, in 2022, will be conducted by Shunske Sato. In this special edition, an important role will be played by visual elements. In 2023, organist/conductor Masato Suzuki will be making his debut with the Bach Society.

Christmas programmes

After the performance of Bach's *Mass in B minor* in December 2021, we will be going on a Christmas tour in 2022, which includes the All of Bach recording of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, cantatas 4-6³. Our recording not only presents the *Christmas Oratorio* itself, but also makes clear how Bach "recycled" cantatas and breathed new life into them with other texts. Alto Alex Potter will compile the programme for Christmas 2023, in which Bach's *Magnificat* will be put into a context that adds depth.

All Souls

In the coming years, we will be building further on the cherished tradition of our All Souls programmes. Last year, Alex Potter set the tone with an impressive programme about the work of Johann Rosenmüller, and in 2020, conductor Nicholas McGegan will shed light on the Requiem Masses by Mozart and Michael Haydn. In 2021, Jos van Veldhoven returns to the Bach Society with a 'seventeenth-century *Deutsches Requiem*', and in 2022 we welcome Hervé Niquet with a French vocal programme.

Centenary season 2021-2022

Our centenary will, of course, revolve around our namesake. At various venues and in countless ways, we will present the work of Bach and work associated with him, often in a way that the audience does not expect of us. The centenary kicks off at the Early Music Festival in September 2021. In the middle of the anniversary season, we will perform the opera *Der Prophet* (see page 7). We are also programming concerts and a variety of activities, culminating in our own Bach Festival at TivoliVredenburg, in May 2022. A special place will be reserved for amateurs (Bach Days at various venues in the Netherlands, several activities during the festival, and participation in the opera *Der Prophet*) and children (music puppet theatre in collaboration with Koomans puppet theatre). Hard-core Bach fans are catered for with *Die Kunst der Fuge*, staged by Folkert Uhde, the *Mass in B minor* conducted by Hans-Christoph Rademann and the *St Matthew Passion* conducted by Shunske Sato.

³ In December 2020, the programme includes the first three cantatas, the tour and the recording for All of Bach



Brandenburg concertos - TivoliVredenburg, October 2018



High-quality artistry and content: “A flexible first-rate ensemble”



The ensemble of the Netherlands Bach Society consists of specialised, enthusiastic musicians, who have mastered every detail of their profession. They are versatile, open-minded and flexible: indispensable qualities for ensemble musicians. To monitor our performance quality, the artistic director holds individual talks with all the musicians every year, we have an artistic committee comprised of in-house and external parties, and the director and artistic director maintain contact with various stakeholders, both within and outside the organisation, such as programmers, partner companies and festival directors.

We continually focus on monitoring our own identity. Which musicians should we use for which repertoire? Is a particular guest conductor a good match for us? Should the Bach Society present this repertoire, or is it better suited to the profile of a fellow ensemble? These are questions we ask when developing each new programme – whether or not in co-production. This means sometimes saying no, as we want our productions to fit the Bach Society’s identity.

As stated in our mission, the defining factor for our activities is their impact or power of expression. From the audience response, the countless comments on the videos on our YouTube channel and the many favourable reviews of our concerts, we can conclude that we often succeed in moving our audiences.

“With the Bach Society, Parrott gets the clarity he seeks as a gift from the singers, who supply the audience with the words: a communicative approach that characterises the whole performance”

**** Monteverdi - Vespers, 13 December 2019, Dagblad Trouw, Frederike Berntsen

“If anyone needs proof of God listen to this heavenly music. Such perfection. Bach was the God’s stenographer, and the Netherlands Bach Society is reciting it for the world to hear. Such incredibly vibrant performances. That the land of Spinoza and Rembrandt gives us such glorious sounds. Bravo!”

Aaron S., YouTube comment about cantata BWV 78

“The company gives an alert performance under Hernán Schvartzman and dares to take risks, Underlining the sensation of a new production to a high degree”

Trouw 19-1-2019***, Frederike Berntsen

“Yesterday, I was at your concert at the Nieuwe Kerk in The Hague. Breathtakingly beautiful! The structure and performance were very special. I often go to concerts, but I’ve seldom been so moved as at this concert”

Audience reaction to All Souls, November 2019

“In its energy, elasticity and sharp gear changes, the Bach Society reveals itself as a flexible first-rate ensemble”

Vivaldi-Dangerous Liaisons, NRC 18-1-2019****, Mischa Spel

“The Netherlands Bach Society is probably the best thing I have discovered on the internet. Many thanks”

Thor Halfdanarson, YouTube comment on Coffee Cantata, BWV 21

Innovation: “the future generation will be in good hands”

As a custodian of early music, not only do we play an important role in the development of new generations of musician, but we also contribute to keeping the early music genre alive and relevant.

Talent development

Under the title Young Bach Fellowship (YBF), the Bach Society has developed a long-term talent development programme, aimed at musicians who have recently graduated and Master's students at a conservatoire. Every two years, we hold auditions to select eight instrumentalists and four singers. This combination ensures that the talented musicians can take part in the Bach Society's programmes at least twice a year. They can also perform in separate formations. The Fellows have a mentor (musician or member of staff) and receive guidance in the areas of marketing, finance, positioning and programming. Fellows can also gain knowledge and experience in other areas, such as production or research. At the moment, we are also exploring possibilities for collaboration with the production house Oorkaan. The YBF programme lasts two years and is rounded off with a concert. Many of the Fellows are placed on our understudy list, which can eventually lead to a place in the core line-up of the ensemble. In this way, we kill two birds with one stone.

<https://www.bachvereniging.nl/young-bach-fellowship>

Besides the Young Bach Fellowship, the Bach Society organises occasional projects for young musicians. In the spring of 2019, we invited seven talented violin students (aged 13-18) to come and be introduced to the Baroque violin. They received workshops and masterclasses from Shunske Sato, culminating in their own solo recording for All of Bach. For this project, we collaborated with the Netherlands Violin Competition and the Dutch Musical Instruments Foundation. In 2021 and 2023, we will be initiating similar projects for other instruments as well⁴.

<https://www.bachvereniging.nl/viool>

Offstage

Talent development offstage is also a focus for the Bach Society. Members of staff are given the opportunity to take training sessions and courses, and talented young employees get the chance to move up to higher positions. The Supervisory Board also gives scope to young talent by appointing a supervisor through the programme Blikverruimers⁵.

⁴ The first project in this series took place in 2016:

<http://www.bachvereniging.nl/inventionen>

⁵ Platform for young commissioners and supervisors:

<http://www.blikverruimers.com>

“I can certainly say that the future generation will be in good hands when it comes to Baroque music education/instruction and performance, at least in the Netherlands. Excellent and an important effort on the part of the NBS!”

Mario Fonseca, YouTube comment on the violin project for young talent, summer 2019



Shunsuke Sato and the Young Bach Fellows, class of 20

Contribution to the development of the genre

'The Netherlands in the '60s became to Baroque performance what Switzerland is to chocolate, watches, and banks'⁶. So as a Dutch ensemble, we have a name to live up to! Fifty years ago, pioneers like Gustav Leonhardt, Frans Brüggen and Nikolaus Harnoncourt made it clear that 'early music' required a unique approach, with specialised musicians and conductors, playing on an appropriate set of instruments. Has time stood still since then? Absolutely not. Our deeply rooted curiosity means we will always continue to experiment and do research. In the coming years, the Bach Society wants to expressly involve the public in this quest. On the one hand, we will do so through the themes we address in our programmes, and on the other through working on the way we communicate, both on and off stage.

- **For some programmes, we will work with a director or dramaturge: Thomas Höft (*Bach's Brewery*, 2020) and Folkert Uhde (*Kunst der Fuge*, 2021). We will collaborate with TivoliVredenburg on directing concerts in some programmes for the main auditorium.**
- **Along with Opera2Day, we will explore the genre of Baroque opera, expanding the musical boundaries from Vivaldi to the contemporary composer Vanni Moretto, developing a fictional Bach opera and incorporating theatre, dance and Baroque music from East and West in *Jesus in India*.**
- **Along with the Early Music Festival (FOM), we will delve into historical acting, by organising concerts and workshops with our audiences. We will explore how gesture and affect play a role in the way in which a musician conveys emotions to the audience. This will result in a performance at the Utrecht Early Theatre Festival, for which the FOM is laying the foundations in the coming years.**
- **Research will continue to play an important role in the way we perform our music. Sometimes, that leads to spectacular line-ups (*Concerto Supergrosso*, February 2020), fantastic stories (*Bach loves Vivaldi*, April 2021) or surprising interpretations (the earliest version of the *St Matthew Passion* with René Jacobs in 2021).**

⁶ **Bernard Sherman**, *Inside early music: conversations with performers* (Oxford, 1997)

Fair pay and sound business practices

Fair pay: background and social dialogue

Long before the discussion about fair pay within the art sector became topical, the Bach Society was devoting itself to remunerating musicians and staff properly. In a 2015 inventory⁷, the Bach Society was one of the best-paid ensembles, along with the Netherlands Chamber Choir. However, the same survey also showed that the fees were still way below the desired minimum. In recent years, we have taken the following measures to work towards better remuneration for our musicians:

- in 2018, the directors of the Bach Society and two fellow ensembles held a discussion with the minister, which led to the new regulations for 'improving fees for ensemble musicians' from the Performing Arts Fund NL⁸.
- part of the positive result for 2018 was earmarked as an appropriated reserve for 'improving musicians' fees'.
- at the start of the 2019-2020 season, there was a structural increase of 10% to our fees.

Remuneration guidelines and implementation of the CAO

In 2016, the music ensembles united in the Dutch Association of Performing Arts (NAPK), with support from the AWVN and following consultation with FNVKIEM Classical Music and the Dutch Musical Artists' Union (NTB), drew up the 'Remuneration guidelines for music ensembles'. The starting point for doing so was formed by the pay scale of the CAO for Dutch Orchestras. As our sector needs to professionalise further, a start was made in 2019 on creating a CAO for the music ensembles. Negotiations with the unions will start in 2020 and the CAO is due to come into force on 1 January 2021.

The aforementioned 'remuneration guidelines for music ensembles' form an important component of the future CAO, in which fringe benefits are also guaranteed. The remuneration guidelines form the basis for the fees as incorporated in the 2021-2024 budgets that accompany this application.

⁷ Beloning Ensembles - een inventarisatie, carried out by Bureau Cubiss on commission from NAPK, May 2015

⁸ From these resources from 2018 and 2019, the Bach Society received €41,696 and €48,800 respectively, and was able to make immediate payments to musicians who met the conditions.

Principles for the current remuneration policy for musicians

Musicians with the Bach Society are not on a contract of employment, but are self-employed or receive remuneration. Performances are given in varying line-ups, ranging from very small (chamber music), through medium-sized to large (*St Matthew Passion*, 70 musicians). So there are considerable differences in the number of hours worked by each musician on an annual basis. Some musicians, such as the continuo group⁹, perform in nearly all the concerts, while others only participate in one project a season.

- **Our rates depend on the degree of musical responsibility (big ensemble, small ensemble and chamber music).**
- **All musicians are paid in accordance with the same fee structure, including the Young Bach Fellows.**
- **The concertmaster and the leader of the wind section receive a fixed allowance for their extra tasks.**
- **Musicians receive fees for the following activities: concerts, rehearsals, giving guest lessons at schools, coaching amateurs, and attending policy meetings and general meetings, supplemented by allowances for travel and per diem.**
- **On their invoices, self-employed musicians include a surcharge of 10% on the gross fee (compensation for the lapsed legal pension scheme through PFZW).**
- **Members of the Instrumentaal-Vocaal Overleg receive an annual allowance for their work in this regard.**
- **There is a limited scheme for continued payment in the case of illness.**
- **Separate agreements are made with soloists and guest conductors.**

Principles for the remuneration policy for staff

- **For the main part, our staff consists of employees on a contract for an indefinite period. We adhere to a sustainable personnel policy, which allows employees to develop and encourages them to remain with the organisation for the long term.**
- **For the salaries of members of staff (including the director and artistic director), we follow the CAO for Drama and Dance. In 2018, all the office positions were compared with the pay scale of this CAO and adjusted where necessary.**

⁹ **The 'basis' of the ensemble: (including at least) harpsichord and/or organ, cello, double bass, bassoon**

Business practices

Financing mix

Over the past period, the Netherlands Bach Society has operated on an average of 21% subsidy (from FPK and the City of Utrecht) and 79% own income. The latter comes from ticket sales (45%) and other income from Friends' donations¹⁰, sponsor contributions and private funds (35%). For some years now, we appear to have been at the maximum of our own income, at the percentage stated above. Besides the exploitation of the Bach Society, our fundraising focuses on All of Bach; an important and expensive project that is driven solely by private funding.

Financial position 2017-2020

The Bach Society can look back on a period of financial stability. The years 2017 and 2018 closed with a positive result. In 2018, this was due in part to generous project budgets (including not implementing the Employment Relationships Deregulation Act (DBA) in 2018, whereby the activity costs were lower than budgeted for), and in part to a few unfilled vacancies. We expect that 2019 will close with a (very) modest negative result.

Financial position 2021-2024

In the period that lies ahead, the financial scene will change. The grounds for the current level of subsidy are based on the FPK's 'regulations for long-term activities subsidies'. This application comes under other regulations, while we also take account of the implementation of the Fair Practice Code and there will be changes in the area of labour laws and regulations.

In the coming period, the Bach Society will take account in the budget of the following developments:

- An increase in the employer's costs for musicians of around 11-30%, as a result of stopping self-employment constructions: based on the performance practice in the years 2017 and 2018, from 2021 there will be a *deficit* of at least € 180,000 per year on the item musicians' fees, without taking account of indexation.
- Increased costs due to the implementation of the CAO for music ensembles.
- The wish to provide structural financing for important activities like talent development and education (so not through fundraising and occasional donations).
- The wish to bring the subsidy level in line with our artistic ambitions: more frequent performances in bigger line-ups, more multidisciplinary collaborations and artistic innovation.
- Implementation of the Balanced Labour Market Act (WAB) and the Employment Relationships Deregulation Act (DBA) may lead to increased costs.

¹⁰ The Friends Association contributes around € 135,000 a year to the exploitation of the Bach Society

Measures to overcome increased costs

Making music at the highest standard demands a frequent and versatile concert practice. From an artistic point of view, we think it is undesirable and irresponsible to reduce our level of activities.

- To offset part of the structural cost increases, we are requesting appropriate subsidy amounts from our subsidisers the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the City of Utrecht.
- The board of the affiliated foundation Support for the Netherlands Bach Society is supporting our ambitions in the areas of internationalisation, artistic quality and innovation during the 2021-24 period, in the form of a special investment contribution.
- The Bach Society has proved successful in the field of fundraising and remains ambitious in this regard. In the coming years, we expect private individuals, in particular, to show an increased willingness to donate.
- Through collaborating and sharing knowledge with fellow ensembles¹¹, we are working on efficiency in the area of HR (e.g. training, career guidance and codes of conduct), business practices (software, new rules and regulations, GDPR) and market research. In the coming years, we want to combine several services and we are exploring the possibility of subsuming them in the form of a cooperative. We are also holding joint talks with the GAK Institute about a pilot study into the long-term employability of musicians.

¹¹ A start has been made with Amsterdam Sinfonietta and the Netherlands Chamber Choir

100 years of KLM – send-off concert in the KLM Crown Lounge before the tour to Japan, 26 Sept 2019





Shutsko

Promoting education and participation: “Thank you, I learned so much!”¹²

All of Bach: education for all

Nowhere else can you find one place with so many high-quality recordings of Bach’s works, including information, interviews and background reports. For All of Bach, we also produce specific educational videos, about instruments or concepts from Baroque music, for example. On YouTube, All of Bach has now grown into a community where Bach fans ask questions and enter into discussion with one another.

Schools programme

Our education package is intended for the upper years of secondary school. In collaboration with BureauPodium, the package has been updated and will be offered to schools in the 2020-2021 season, following a pilot. In the programme, which comprises online modules, guest lessons from our musicians and visits to concerts, the emphasis is on pupils making music themselves. An in-depth programme is provided for pupils who are taking music as one of their final exams.

We deliberately chose to focus specifically on older pupils, as there is already considerable provision for primary education. Our education activities for secondary education and amateurs are restricted primarily to the Utrecht region. This focus is in line with the size and strength of our organisation. Our ambition is to grow from 12 schools (270 pupils) in 2020 to 24 schools (540 pupils) in the period 2021-2024.

Amateurs

Not every music-lover is able to make a career as a musician, or wants to do so, but many people get pleasure from music as a hobby. The Bach Society musicians are happy to contribute to the pleasure that amateurs get from playing and singing.

- Since the 2018-2019 season, our musicians have been coaching the ensemble Collegium Musicum Traiectum. This vocal-instrumental ensemble, based in Utrecht, is comprised of enthusiastic amateur musicians. The interaction between experienced professionals and enthusiastic amateurs is a great inspiration for both parties.

<https://www.bachvereniging.nl/coaching>

- In the productions we present in collaboration with Opera2Day, there is always a role for amateurs.
- A big project for amateur musicians makes up part of the festivities for our centenary season.

Other initiatives

Our education activities will be expanded, by providing more material on All of Bach, podcasts, and introductions and interviews related to the concerts. In our centenary season, we are initiating a number of participation projects, some of which involve amateur choirs.

¹² Redbrian3655, YouTube comment on the mini-documentary about the Baroque violin project for talented youngsters

Audiences, data and marketing

Focus on broadening the audience

The Bach Society has a long-standing relationship with a large part of its audience. Almost 80% of our Friends and people who go to concerts in Naarden are between the ages of 50 and 80. Although we do not have detailed data about other visitors, we expect the group we know about to be representative¹³. While the Bach Society cherishes our ties with these music-lovers, in the coming years we also want to reach new audiences. We will be focusing primarily on a younger generation (40+), people with a limited budget and people from non-Dutch backgrounds.

Each new target group requires a different approach. Qualitative research has shown us that the 40+ age group has a need for in-depth information and reflection. We respond to this by providing more performance-related fringe activities and by experimenting with the form and duration of our concerts.

The Bach Society has limited experience in reaching audiences from non-Dutch backgrounds. Initially, we are adopting a learning stance: holding discussions, gathering knowledge, conducting qualitative research and choosing the right collaboration partners. Through the intercultural themes of the operas we are presenting in the coming years, we hope to meet new audience groups and form relationships with them. In the coming years, we aim to grow towards a wide programme of events that meet the requirements of various target groups.

Through price differentiation, social actions in collaboration with Utrecht organisations ('buy a ticket for someone else') and occasional concerts at places like care homes, community centres and schools, we aim to lower the threshold (financial and otherwise), so we can introduce everyone to our music.

Marketing and pricing policy

Through the All of Bach channel on YouTube, the Bach Society reaches a much younger audience (aged 25-35) than in the concert halls. Alongside the traditional means, we are investing increasingly in online marketing. Taking training sessions and courses in this area is a permanent necessity, as is regularly investing in software and (external) expertise. In the coming years, we will be investing in our CRM and personal online marketing.

Bach is for everyone. That is why All of Bach is free of charge, why we give concerts with discounts for students and young people, and why we have a fixed number of €15 tickets for our performances of the *St Matthew Passion* in Naarden. At the same time, we sell the best seats for the concerts we manage ourselves for a price that reflects the scarcity of these tickets. Through profit share deals, we make pricing agreements with venues to suit the policies of both organisations.

¹³ Reports from the Philharmonie Haarlem and TivoliVredenburg from 2019 show a similar picture.

Data, audience survey

- **The Bach Society takes part in DIP¹⁴, through which we gather more information about our audiences and those of other cultural organisations. This helps us tighten up our target group policy.**
- **At least once every two years, we conduct a qualitative or quantitative survey among our audience members. In 2020, we will conduct a reputation and image survey.**
- **The Bach Society takes part in the working group “Music for Everyone”, by the Utrechts Muziek Overleg (UMO). In the spring of 2020, a joint survey will be conducted into diversity and inclusion (programme, audience, partners and staff) at the Utrecht music organisations: forming a ‘benchmark’ as the start for an action plan.**
- **Through our own ticket sales system, we manage our own data about our concert-goers and have insight into the preferences of our current audiences.**

¹⁴ Digital information platform Podiumkunsten', a joint initiative by NAPK, VVTP and VSCD



Geographical distribution

Positioning in municipal cultural region

The Bach Society is part of the municipal cultural region of Utrecht. We count ourselves fortunate to have a position in the heart of the country, in a strongly growing city with a wealth of high-quality art institutions, particularly in the music scene (classical and otherwise). In the city, we collaborate with a number of partners, including the Early Music Festival, TivoliVredenburg, the Netherlands Violin Competition, the Netherlands Chamber Choir and Collegium Musicum Traiectum. The Bach Society participates in joint cultural activities in the city, under the banner of Utrecht Marketing.

Other collaboration partners, focus on the social domains

- The Grote Kerk Naarden, is an important and valued partner of the Bach Society. Our shared hundred-year-old Passion tradition is included in the National Inventory of Intangible Heritage¹⁵.
- Negotiations are underway between the Grote Kerk Naarden, the Bach Society and the UAF (foundation for refugee students) about exploring possibilities for cultural collaboration in the coming years.
- In collaboration with the Alzheimer's Centre, we are developing projects to raise *awareness* about dementia. This will result in a concert series with narration by Philip Scheltens (director of the Alzheimer's Centre), visual art and music.

National distribution

The primary function of the Netherlands Bach Society is a national one. Outside our core cities Utrecht, Naarden and Amsterdam (where we have our own series), we perform throughout the Netherlands: from Groningen to Maastricht, from Arnhem to Middelburg, and from Kampen to Maassluis—we want to be visible in as many places as possible. In the coming years, our partnership with Opera2Day will lead to many performances in the national theatre circuit, besides our usual concert halls and churches. One point for attention is that performing works with big line-ups outside the Randstad remains difficult, due to the imbalance between costs and income.

Online reach

For everyone who cannot attend our concerts in person, there is All of Bach. At the end of January 2020, the All of Bach YouTube channel had around 100,000 subscribers and over 14 million views. Our greatest reach is in the age category 25-35. The international view list is led by the US, followed by Japan, Germany and Mexico.

¹⁵ <http://www.immaterieelerfgoed.nl/nl/page/5581/matth%C3%A4us-passion-door-de-nederlandse-bachvereniging-in-grote-kerk>

Internationalisation

The Bach Society is an internationally oriented organisation. We work with guest conductors, directors and musicians from all over the world, and through All of Bach we are in contact with a global audience. Reinforcing our international profile is a priority for the coming years.

We plan to organise an intercontinental tour once every two years, whereby Japan (and the region) is viewed as a growth market.

- Following our successful tour to Japan in 2019, we are negotiating a follow-up tour for a bigger line-up (June or October 2022) with Kajimoto Concert Management.
- Long-term collaboration with Bachfest Leipzig: after giving the closing concert of the festival in 2020, the Bach Society will also be collaborating on the editions for 2022 and 2023.
- As part of the Internationaler Bach Wettbewerb Leipzig Organ 2020, the Bach Society is proposing to give the winner a 'Sonderpreis', in the form of an organ recording for All of Bach in Leipzig, in collaboration with Ton Koopman.
- Long-term agreements have been made with the International Bach Academy Stuttgart for 2020 (cantatas), 2021 (Mass in B minor) and 2022 (programme to be announced).
- In 2021, we will once again be performing at the Konzerthaus Wien (cantata programme).
- In 2021, concerts and recordings for All of Bach will take place in Weimar, Thüringen, Naumburg and Freiberg.

In conclusion

The Netherlands Bach Society takes pride and pleasure in its efforts to let everyone enjoy Bach's music. We hope to continue to deserve the appreciation shown for our activities!

