A TREASURY OF BACH IN THE MIDWEST

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Why do Bach scholars from around the world travel to Berea, Ohio?
It began with the Riemenschneider family.

In this family portrait from 1885, Albert and his father Karl, president of German Wallace College, are circled.

At least six generations of Riemenschneiders have been involved with Baldwin Wallace as faculty, administration, students, and patrons, right down to today.
Albert, with the help of his wife, Selma, founded the Conservatory (around 1900) and the BW Bach Festival (in 1933) and served as Director of the Conservatory for over forty years.
Albert was an inveterate collector, pursuing desired editions in-person and by trans-Atlantic snail mail. He amassed a fantastic collection, which was given to the College by Selma upon his passing. The WTC was a particular focus.
Selma gave the collection to the College in 1951, naming it in honor of Albert’s parents. In 1969 it became the Riemenschneider Bach Institute. Elinore Barber served as the first Director and inaugurated *BACH: The Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute*. Elinore served until 1998, when Mel Unger became Director and Editor. Along the way, the collections grew through purchases, subscriptions, and gifts, including those of Emmy Martin (a collector) and Hans David, the prominent musicologist.
Today the collections encompass 800 vault-housed items, including many first editions and a small but significant collection of manuscripts. There are also general collections comprising several thousand volumes of books, scores, collected editions, and monuments. All of this is supplemented by the Jones Music Library, which collects books, scores, and media at an undergraduate level.
In 1982, the RBI purchased, from the Hinrichsen family, thirteen MS parts for Bach’s Cantata 174, *Ich Liebe den Höchsten von ganzen Gemüte*. Used at the first performance in Leipzig in 1729, some of the parts include elements in Bach’s hand.

Here, the copyist has written out the wrong violin part for the closing chorale and Bach has crossed it out and corrected it in his own hand.

Dr. Riemenschneider purchased this MS copy of Book One of Das Wohltemperierte Klavier in the 1930s. Copied by Heinrich Nicolaus Gerber (and others) beginning in the 1720s, it is an important source for study of the work. (Note Gerber’s florid style, including the idiosyncratic half-notes).

After 300 years, the manuscript needed some loving care. We obtained an IMLS grant to preserve it in 2020. It was disbound from its later binding, the paper was mended and stabilized, and each sheet was rehoused in its own sleeve.

The digital object is at https://digital.opal-libraries.org/digital/collection/p16708coll9/id/37/. There is an online exhibit at https://libguides.bw.edu/GerberMS.
The Bach Institute is not ALL Bach. We have first editions and other rare materials that cover a wide spectrum of Western music.

This is a first edition of Brahms’ *Ein Deutsches Requiem* that includes conductor’s markings by Brahms himself. It once belonged to the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna. We believe that Brahms was marking this score for use by other conductors.

One of my personal favorites is Novi Thesauri Musici, a set of motets in part book form printed in Venice by Antonio Gardano in 1568. It comprises six books of motets ranging from four to twelve voices, printed on beautiful paper and bound in vellum with ivory and gut closures (most of which are missing).

The work shown here was edited into a modern version by our first RBI Scholar awardee, Simeon Brown, and performed by a small student choir at his final presentation.

Today the Riemenschneider Bach Institute is a steward for its priceless collections and a center for scholarship by our own students and scholars from around the world.

The Institute is led collaboratively by
- Dr. Christina Fuhrmann, Editor of BACH – also serves as our primary liaison with the larger world of Bach scholars
- Dr. Danielle Kuntz, RBI Scholar in Residence – responsible for engaging students with the RBI
- Paul Cary, Conservatory Librarian – responsible for library operations
GLOBAL SCHOLARSHIP

Every year, the RBI is visited by scholars from around the world.

- Yo Tomita has visited repeatedly to study our collection of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*.
- Stephen Crist studied a recently-acquired MS by Johann Phillip Bach and created an edition of it, now available from A-R editions.
- Elizabeth Ford came to study a text by Anne Gunn that accompanied an 18th-century musical board game.
SUPPORT FOR SCHOLARS

Many of our visiting scholars are supported by our Martha Goldsworthy Arnold Fellowship, which underwrites expenses for scholars, up to $2500.

Authors are encouraged to interact with our students and are invited to submit work for publication in *BACH* if appropriate.

Interested scholars should visit [https://www.bw.edu/libraries/riemenschnieder-bach-institute/](https://www.bw.edu/libraries/riemenschnieder-bach-institute/). The application requires a research proposal, a CV, and a budget. Questions can be directed to Dr. Christina Fuhrmann, bachinst@bw.edu.

Dr. John McKean and Paul Cary with a copy of the *Wegweiser*, a 17th-century organ manual
STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

One of our primary goals in recent years has been to increase the engagement of students with the Bach Institute.

Rightly or wrongly, past generations of students tended to see the Institute as a Fortress of Solitude, entered by a privileged few.

We have tried to get every Conservatory student to have at least one or two experiences in the RBI during their time at BW.

A class visit on Encountering Rare Books (and scores) using the 1568 part books
STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

We have engaged students in a variety of ways.

- Class visits by various courses
- Sessions on encountering rare books (and scores)
- Open houses and exhibits
- Courses taught in the Institute
- Honors options
- Visits by studio classes (piano, strings) with customized, focused exhibits of materials
- Faculty-student collaborative courses making use of the resources of the RBI
- Summer Scholars projects
- The RBI Scholar program
STUDENT OUTPUT

We have tried to encourage flexibility in terms of student projects and outputs.

- Traditional papers
- Presentations, including at Conservatory Convocations, University-wide scholarship days, and at our annual Bach Festival
- Performances
- Compositions
- Oral history work (still working on the preservation aspect of this)
- Exhibits in the RBI
- Banner posters
- Online exhibits

Chase Castle, ‘19, shares students’ work with alumni

Dr. Christina Fuhrmann and RBI Scholar Dylan Sanzenbacher, ‘20, at a joint presentation
The RBI Scholar program was conceived by Dr. Mel Unger and originally supported one student’s work in the Riemenschneider Bach Institute.

A successful fundraising effort now enables us to support several students a year doing independent, faculty-mentored research in the Institute. Each student receives financial support and the faculty mentor receives a small stipend as well.

There are no limits on subject matter or the major of the student. Outputs may range from a traditional lecture to a recital, a composition, or even a musical game. One award each year is supported by our Community Arts School and is designed to engage the School’s students (particularly younger students).
ABS BROKAW AWARD

The American Bach Society’s Frances Alford Brokaw Grant provides $1000 to an undergraduate student from OUTSIDE BW to do research at the RBI involving Bach or his circle.

We have had three students come to the RBI to work with our faculty and librarians to extend their knowledge of Bach and of the research process. Interested students and their faculty should see https://www.americanbachsociety.org/research.html#brokaw grant for guidelines. The deadline for this year was October 1 but depending on response, they might consider late applications.

Dr. Fuhrmann and Brokaw Scholar Alyssa Yoshitake in the Institute
A COVID EXHIBIT

Shortly before the pandemic closed us down, we had our Gerber manuscript of the Well-Tempered Klavier preserved and rehoused. We planned to do an exhibit of the work at our annual Bach Festival.

Frustrated by our inability to do so, I decided to do an online exhibit instead. I spent my initial weeks of working from home developing the exhibit, using LibGuides as the platform. Of course that involved certain compromises, but it was available and a known factor.

Although not a full-featured exhibit, it has accumulated over 1300 page views and served as a model for student exhibits.

https://libguides.bw.edu/GerberMS
Initially, when the pandemic hit, BW went remote, and faculty concentrated on getting through the spring semester.

We did not, however, want to give up on student interactions with the RBI. In the fall of 2020, Dr. Christina Fuhrmann and I (Paul) collaborated on a final course project for Hist & Lit 3 (Classical and Romantic) in which students (individually or in groups) developed an online exhibition focusing on one rare item from the RBI vault. Students chose from a list of items, all of which were available digitally in ContentDM.

The exhibits were developed and hosted in LibGuides.
CREATING THE EXHIBITS

Chris and I did a good deal of planning to decide how to approach this novel project. I “visited” Chris' class twice over Zoom. In the first session, in week three, we provided an overview of the goals, expectations, and process.

For the second visit, around mid-semester, I created three videos, about twenty-five minutes in all, on the basics of using LibGuides to create the exhibits. I showed those and answered questions.

I also created a LibGuide for each exhibit and one account for each group. The accounts were all deleted at the end of the semester.
CREATING THE EXHIBITS

Early in the semester, each group was able to visit their item in-person one time. They got to look at it, turn the pages in most cases, and ask questions. Those visits, facilitated jointly by me and Chris, took up about ten hours over the course of three days. One group took us up on our offer of a second visit (for the Burney History).

After the training, the students seemed pretty self-sufficient. Although there were exceptions, most of them needed little intervention from me, somewhat to my surprise.

The exhibits are available at https://libguides.bw.edu/MUC321Fall2020.
In addition to the header and a general layout, the guides were created with a set of tabs (pages in LibGuides lingo). Students were given guidance about what should go into each page. Some pages were more specific while others were open to whatever content seemed appropriate to the students. Some graphic content and a link to the digital object were required.

I offered to provide images to students on request, but most of them simply grabbed images from screenshots or saved the images in the browser.
OUTCOMES

Naturally, the exhibits varied in quality, according to the students’ capabilities, interest level, and time commitment. Most of the students seemed to enjoy the process.

They also loved coming to the RBI in-person and seeing the actual items. Overall, Dr. Fuhrmann felt that the process contributed to the learning goals of the course.
WOMEN IN THE RBI
SELMA

Women have been important to the Conservatory and the Bach Institute since the beginning. Selma Riemenschneider taught voice and piano in the Conservatory and co-founded the Bach Festival with Albert in 1933. After Albert died, Selma gave their collection to the College as the Karl and Emilie Riemenschneider Memorial Bach Library. She continued to nurture and advocate for it from afar, through correspondence and visits.
ELINORE BARBER

The Riemenschneider family, particularly Selma’s son Edwin, spearheaded the effort to found the Riemenschneider Bach Institute. Elinore Barber, seen here with Albert Schweitzer (a friend of the Riemenschneiders and one of Barber’s mentors) was hired as the founding Director.
In addition to leading the Institute, Barber founded the journal, *BACH*, and taught music history. She gave public lectures and founded a Symposium Speaker series. In 1982, she was instrumental in acquiring a set of parts for Bach’s *Ich liebe den Höchsten von ganzen Gemüte*. Barber retired in 1998 and returned to Hastings College in Nebraska, where she had taught before coming to BW, and served as College Historian and Archivist.
One of the more enigmatic figures in the files of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute is Emmy Martin. Her husband, George, was chairman of Sherwin Williams in the first half of the 20th century. We know that Emmy was a socialite and a supporter of the arts. Fortunately for us, she was an avid collector of first editions. She gave us many of our rarest items, including this 1821 vocal score of *Der Freischütz*. 
Today, the Institute is led by Dr. Christina Fuhrmann, Professor and Editor of *BACH* and Dr. Danielle Kuntz, Associate Professor and Bach Scholar-in-Residence. Under their leadership, efforts to explore and highlight the role of women in the Bach Institute have taken a prominent place in coursework and research.
Destinee Siebe (BM, Music History, 2019; MM, Musicology, UW Madison, 2021) did a Summer Scholars project in which she created a guide to the role of women in the RBI. She discovered their presence as composers, scholars, leaders, and patrons.

For her senior thesis, Destinee concentrated on Harriet Ware and her song cycle, *A Day in Arcady*. She studied its background and materials, and performed part of the cycle at her senior presentation.

Destinee worked from Selma Riemenschneider’s own copy, now held in the RBI vault.
During the 2019-20 year, a Faculty-Student Collaborative, led by Dr. Danielle Kuntz, picked up on Destinee’s work. Digging further into the archive, they uncovered more materials relating to women in the RBI, focusing particularly on Selma Riemenschneider and on the University’s chapter of Mu Phi Epsilon.

They are continuing their work and will be publishing it in *BACH: Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute*. 

Dr. Kuntz and Destinee Siebe with part of the Riemenschneider archive
Thanks for “watching”!

Come and ask questions during the MLA Midwest Chapter’s poster session on October 22, 2021, 2:45-3:15.

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https://www.bw.edu/libraries/riemenshneider-bach-institute/