

Meet Bill Buchman: Bassoonist, Bread Maker, Bridge Player



How long have you been involved with Music of the Baroque?

I've been a regular member of Music of the Baroque since Jane Glover and Nicholas Kraemer arrived in 2002, though I performed with the group once under Tom Wikman.

Who is your favorite baroque composer, and why?

I'm an unabashed fan of Bach, in particular his large choral works. Though he was viewed as rather traditional by his contemporaries, he was a brilliant craftsman and brought new levels of structure and detail to existing forms. He also created original sound palettes that create a broad emotional spectrum in his music. I'm thrilled every time we program his Passions and oratorios.

How is performing with Music of the Baroque different from performing with other groups?

Not only do we perform repertoire with Music of the Baroque that is neglected by other large performing organizations, we approach it with a style that casts the music in a fresh and engaging light. Our conductors, singers and instrumentalists have a commitment to stripping away from this music decades and centuries of accumulated sediment and revealing them in their original glory.

How long have you owned your current instrument?

My bassoon is less than three years old, made by Fox Products in northern Indiana. That company was founded by Hugo Fox, principal bassoonist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in the first part of the last century.

When did you decide to become a professional musician?

I was in my third year of a physics degree in college when I realized that I not only enjoyed music more but was also better at it. I went to music school after graduating and won my first job after only two years.

If you had to choose another career, what would it be?

I love baking bread, and I've dreamed of opening a bakery when I'm ready to retire from performing.

When you're not performing or practicing, what do you like to do?

I'm an avid bridge player and enjoy playing at local duplicate clubs.

Where was your last vacation?

My partner and I made an eleven-day trip to Northern California and Oregon with bassist Michael Hovnanian and his wife. We enjoyed driving along the Pacific Coast and through forests of redwood and we visited several state and national parks. It was a relief to return to the straight, flat roads of Chicago afterwards, though!

Bill Buchman will be performing Mozart's Bassoon Concerto with Music of the Baroque under the baton of Jane Glover on January 23 in Evanston and January 24 at the Harris Theater (Millennium Park). Visit baroque.org for details.