Travel & Arts

The Bach Festival Society of Winter Park is in high demand and artistic director John Sinclair couldn’t be more pleased. Or more busy.

“It’s a season of collaborations,” Sinclair says. “We’re thrilled.”

On Oct. 8, the Bach Festival Society choir will perform with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of London in Steinmetz Hall as part of the Residency Festival at the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts in Orlando.

“It’s a real honor that they asked us,” Sinclair says. “But it’s a real workout.”

The performance at the Bach Festival Society orchestra recently played with Orlando Ballet at its season-opening “Reflections” program. And still to come: The orchestra and choir will provide the score to a screening of “The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring” at the Dr. Phillips Center.

Ballet, corination, Middle Earth: The Bach Festival Society gets around

Matthew J. Palm
The Artistic Type

In any day within the teaching studios at Crealdé School of Art, one might witness students painting still life, honing photography skills, throwing pottery on a wheel or making landscapes come to life on canvas.

It’s a place I’ve heard mentioned many times in the five-plus years of living in Orlando but never visited until recently. Peter Schreyer, the Winter Park organization’s CEO and executive director of 26 years, enlightened me on Crealdé’s rich history and what happens on a day-to-day basis.

“We are, first and foremost, an art school. We put a lot of value in community involvement and activism. That’s what we’re all about,” he said. “We have a permanent faculty of 47, we’re inching up to 50. Plus, there are a bunch of visiting artists we bring in. We have a curriculum of about 150 courses we do throughout the year.”

As the school approaches its 50th anniversary in 2025, it has seen a wave of growth, now welcoming about 4,000 students per year with classes every day of the week. Here are five noteworthy items as Crealdé remembers its past and looks toward future expansion.

**A LASTING LEGACY**

Artist and philanthropist William Jenkins founded Crealdé Arts Inc. in 1975 with the vision of teaching fine arts to the community. A University of Florida alumnus (class of 1934), Jenkins traveled to Florence, Italy, to study at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts before returning to Winter Park to build residential communities and shopping centers while also serving for a year as a city commissioner.

Central Florida Explorer Patrick Connolly details his first visit to Crealdé School of Art

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By the late 1940s, Croddal had grown to include three outreach sites that protected lanes for children, teens and underserved communities. After overcoming pandemic-related hurdles, which involved closing for six weeks and operating at 50 percent capacity for some time, Croddal now offers around 150 courses annually for students of all ages.

“A long time ago, most of our classes were art 1. We have classes all the time now. People have more flexible schedules,” Schreyer said. “Within the last six months [of closures], our enrollment was back where it was before. In another year, we were running 25 percent better than pre-COVID.”

THE LAKE

In a rare multi-disciplinary collaboration, “The Lake” is a documentary photography project featuring 10 photographers who teamed up to explore the landscapes and history of Lake Apopka.

The traveling exhibit had been planned to tour around Winter Garden, displaying an interpretive history of the exploitation of humans and land, but the closure of the organization had arranged an exhibition showcasing his paintings, which are now on display in the Alice & William Jenkins Gallery through Jan. 20.

PATRICK NOZE: ARTIST OF THE AMERICAS

Third-generation Haitian-American painter, sculptor, and illustrator Patrick Noze, currently serves as the senior gallery curator for the gallery in the coming months to be transported to the gallery in the coming months.

HANNIBAL SQUARE HERITAGE CENTER

Amid the gentrification of a luxury-condo land in Winter Park, which has resulted in the displacement of Black residents and businesses, the Hannibal Square Heritage Center aims to preserve Afro-American history.

The center, which opened its doors in 2007, was officially founded in 1881, just 40 years after Florida became a state. The center is a testament to the hopeful idea that mankind can do with the best and the worst that humanity can do with the best and the worst of human and land, but also of destruction of wildlife. But there’s also a lot of good people there and a lot of potential for the future.”

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