

THE SAINT MARK'S
MUSIC

SERIES
2023-2024



All Bach on the Flentrop Organ

Kimberly Marshall, organist

Friday, May 3, 7:30 pm

In-person and livestreamed
Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, Seattle

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Saint Mark's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People, who are still here, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the life of all the Coast Salish tribes.

All Bach on the Flentrop Organ

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PROGRAM

Bach in Weimar, 1708-1717

Toccatà in F Major, BWV 540 i

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Chorale settings from the Orgelbüchlein

Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland, BWV 599

Wenn wir in höchsten Noten sein, BWV 641

Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ, BWV 639

Fugue in F Major, BWV 540 ii

Concerto in G Major

[Allegro]

Grave

Presto

Johann Ernst (1696-1715)

INTERMISSION

Two "Leipzig" chorales in earlier Weimar versions

Bach

Fantasia super "Komm heiliger Geist, Herr Gott," BWV 651a

Fantasia super "Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland," BWV 659a

Toccatà in D Minor ("Dorian"), BWV 538

Fantasia super "Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele," BWV 654a

Passacaglia in C Minor, BWV 582

PROGRAM NOTES

By the grace of God, Wilhelm Enst, Duke of Saxony, Jülich, Cleves, and Berg, also Engern and Westphalia, etc. Steadfast, dear and loyal concillor, Whereas we agreed to appoint olr chamber musician and court organist, Johann Sebastian Bach of Mühlhausen, we also decree for his annual salary and allowances, at our pleasure, One hundred and fifty florins, in cash, Eighteen bushels of grain [wheat], Twelve bushels of barley, Four cords of wood, and Thirty pails of beer from our castle brewery here, beverage tax-free... June 20, 1708

Thus began Bach's employment as organist at the Weimar court, a position he held for over nine years, during which time he composed most of his music for organ. Today's program explores this fecund period in Bach's life with a varied program that includes some of his most virtuosic free works, an arrangement for organ of an orchestral concerto, and early versions of chorale settings that Bach would later revise.

The *Tocatta in F Major* is Bach's longest extant organ prelude, with pedal solos and manual virtuosity that clearly reflect his bravura as an organist. It is believed that the piece was composed for the organ in the court chapel of Weissenfels, a nearby Thuringian town where Bach's wife had relatives. This is the only contemporary German organ known to have had a pedal range extending up to the high F that Bach requires in the second solo. The modulating arpeggiated sections are interrupted by pedal points with sharp upbeat chords, creating a sense of great vitality. In three especially dense sections, Bach employs the opening canonic theme of the *Tocatta* to create contrast before returning to the upbeat chords and arpeggiations. This formal organization, composed of repeated musical material that returns throughout the work (ritornello), is a hallmark of the Italian concerto and a distinguishing feature of Bach's mature Weimar style. When he encountered the work in 1831, Felix Mendelssohn wrote: "The F-major *Tocatta*, with the modulation at the end, sounds as if the church were about to tumble down."

Orgelbüchlein Chorales

The title page of Bach's *Little Organ Book* specifies that its purpose is to guide organists in making chorale settings and to become practiced in the study of pedaling. The book contains 46 chorale settings, ordered according to the liturgical year, although Bach wrote titles for many more chorales that were never composed. A famous anecdote relates that the court organist composed the *Orgelbüchlein* while he was imprisoned by the Duke of Weimar in 1717, but

the manuscript's watermarks and handwriting prove that the majority of the chorales were completed by 1714. The standard setting of this collection presents one stanza of the chorale with the melody in the top voice, accompanied by distinctive figures. This is heard in **Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland** (Savior of the Nations, Come), which opens the book. The descending lines of the accompaniment here represent God coming down to earth in human form, as related by the chorale text. The other two chorales performed today are from the last section of the *Orgelbüchlein* and are unusual in that they require two manuals. The tune of **Wenn wir in höchsten Noten sein** (When we are in greatest need), is heavily ornamented, reflecting Bach's expertise at melodic embellishment. (This is heard later in the program in the Weimar version of the Advent chorale *Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland*.) **Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ** (I call to you, Lord Jesus Christ) presents the chorale melody as a treble solo over a rolling accompaniment. It is the only trio setting in the *Orgelbüchlein*.

The *Fugue in F Major* was not composed at the same time as the *Tocatta*, so they are often played independently. Tonight, they create bookends for the *Orgelbüchlein* chorales in much the same way that Bach would later use the *Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major* to frame the chorale settings in his *Clavierübung, Part III*. The F-major *Fugue* is a double fugue with two subjects that are presented independently and then combined in the final section. The first subject is a descending chromatic theme that Bach treats in *stile antico* counterpoint. He contrasts this with a livelier subject that outlines triads in shorter note values. The *Fugue* comes to a majestic close with the first subject in the bottom octave of the pedal, over which Bach juxtaposes the second subject in the highest octave of the keyboard.

"Leipzig" chorales in Weimar versions

The two chorale settings which follow were originally composed in Weimar and later revised by Bach in Leipzig, where they were included in a collection known as the "Leipzig 18." The Advent chorale **Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland** (Savior of the nations, come) presents each line of the chorale imitatively in the accompanying parts before the heavily decorated melody enters on a solo voice in the right hand. The dramatic Pentecost chorale, "**Komm heiliger Geist, Herr Gott**," (Come holy spirit, Lord God) is presented in long notes in the pedals, under swirling arpeggiations that suggest the rushing winds of the Holy Spirit. (The Leipzig version is greatly expanded to over twice the length of this first draft made in Weimar.)

PROGRAM NOTES

(continued)

Concerto in G Major by Johann Ernst

One of Bach's most important connections at the Weimar court was Prince Johann Ernst of Sachsen-Weimar, the Duke's younger brother and an avid music lover. From 1711 to 1713 Ernst studied at the University of Utrecht, with trips to Düsseldorf and Amsterdam to widen his knowledge. After his return to Weimar from Holland, he had Italian music sent to him, and he took lessons in composition from J. G. Walther, the organist at Weimar's Stadtkirche. Ernst's appreciation of the Italian style led him to compose orchestral concerti, including the one performed here in an organ transcription by Bach. The piece is characteristic of the Italian concerto, with three contrasting movements that feature alternation between an orchestral ensemble and a violin soloist with continuo. The changes between tutti and solo in the first movement are rendered on the organ by changes between manuals. The lyrical middle movement also contrasts the sounds of two different manuals. Because of the speed and virtuosity required in the last movement, no manual changes are made; nevertheless, the original ritornello structure is clearly heard in the alternation between arpeggiated sections with pedal and the two-part textures.

The **Dorian Toccata** reflects Bach's assimilation of Vivaldi's concerto style and its application to a work for solo organ. It is one of only two organ preludes where Bach indicated for the organist to change between two keyboards—Oberwerk and Positiv. This reflects the two contrasting ensembles of the baroque concerto, the full ensemble (*ripieno*) and the soloists (*concertino*). Each has distinctive musical material, the *ritornello* (or returning music) played by the *ripieno* after diverting episodes played by the *concertino*. In the Dorian Toccata, however, both the ritornello and episodes are based on the opening motive; Bach features both on the two keyboards to maintain a sense of constant flow, rather than alternation, between the musical ideas. He builds tension through dissonant chords and sustained trills which produce a work of dazzling virtuosity.

Bach's Weimar setting of the Communion hymn, "**Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele**" (Deck thyself, my soul, with gladness) features consonant thirds and sixths to create a feeling of serenity underneath the chorale tune in the right hand. The text describes the preparation of the soul for unity with Christ; Bach's ornamented melody gives a musical realization of the German verb "schmücken," to decorate.

The **Passacaglia** (from "pasar" to walk, and "calle" street) originated in the early 17th century as a refrain for a special type of song in Italy and Spain. During the second quarter of the century, it developed into a variation form built upon a repeated bass line or harmonic pattern, similar to the variations of the ciaccona, a courtly dance. Bach's famous **Passacaglia in C minor** is found in a manuscript that may be dated in part to 1707-08 or even earlier. Still, it is highly doubtful that he could have composed such a piece before coming into contact with the ritornello forms of Vivaldi around 1713. This is probably a culminating work of his time in Weimar. The first half of the bass line upon which the Passacaglia is constructed is found in the *Christe* movement of André Raison's *Mass on the Second Tone*. We do not know if Bach consciously adapted it from that source. The opening fifth and subsequent semitones are characteristic intervals for Passacaglia themes and are also found in Buxtehude's one surviving essay in the genre, which may have served as a model for Bach. There are twenty-one statements of the Passacaglia, which lead directly to a masterful fugue, whose subject is based upon the first half of the Passacaglia theme. Every entry of the subject is accompanied by two countersubjects, creating a permutation fugue of exhilarating complexity.

The Weimar years were crucial for Bach's compositional development, but he felt increasingly constrained by the narrowness of his duties as court organist. He began to look for positions as Capellmeister, where he would be in charge of all court music. His decision to accept such a position at the court of Cöthen led to his arrest by the Duke of Weimar on November 6, 1717. He was imprisoned in the County Judge's place of detention for almost a month, before being "unfavorably discharged" from the Duke's service. On December 29, he took up the position of Capellmeister to Prince Leopold of Anhalt Cöthen, where he would work for over 5 years, composing orchestral suites, instrumental partitas, the first book of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, and the Brandenburg concerti. Unfortunately for organists, this new chapter of Bach's career produced little music for organ. It was not until Bach moved to Leipzig that he returned to composing large works for the instrument.

Program notes by Kimberly Marshall

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Kimberly Marshall is known worldwide for her compelling programs and presentations of organ music. Her distinguished achievement in organ performance and scholarship was recognized by the Royal College of Organists in 2022 with their highest award. She is an accomplished teacher, giving master classes internationally. She currently holds the Patricia and Leonard Goldman Endowed Professorship in Organ at Arizona State University. From 2019-2022 she held the Hedda Andersson Visiting Professorship at the Malmö Academy of Music.

Marshall has performed and presented her research at 11 national conventions of the AGO. A review of her recital in Washington, DC in July 2010 praised her as “a multi-faceted musician” who “pushed the organ to its limit with her virtuosic demands in playing and registration....This was a royal performance by one of our royalty!” In July 2018, she was chosen as the organ soloist with orchestra for the final concert of the AGO national convention in the Kauffman Center, Kansas City, where she was extolled for “the ease and facility” with which she performed the “virtuosic pedal cadenza.” (*The American Organist*, Oct 2018).

In 2019, Kimberly Marshall inaugurated the new Klais organ in St. Petri Cathedral, Malmö, the largest instrument in Scandinavia. She appeared at the Boston Early Music Festival and gave the opening concert for the national convention of the Organ Historical

Society in Dallas. Her expertise in early Spanish and Italian repertoire was acknowledged by invitations to perform on the Spanish baroque-style organ at Oberlin Conservatory and the Italian-baroque inspired organ at Christ Church Cathedral, Cincinnati. She performed and taught at the Goteborg International Organ Academy in 2020, 2021 and 2022, opening the Malmö Organ Festival in May 2022. In the same month, she gave the first guest concert at Washington National Cathedral since the pandemic, to an enthusiastic audience. Engagements in 2023 include recitals for the Oaxaca International Organ Festival, a teaching residency at Yale University, and performances at the Orgelpark in Amsterdam, St. Paul’s Cathedral, London, and on the new symphonic organ at Göteborg Concert Hall.

Performer, scholar, and educator, Kimberly Marshall is a committed advocate of the organ. She works to promote the instrument in both local and global communities. She is regularly consulted by churches searching for organists and music directors, as well as by institutions seeking advice on instrument installations. She is the advisor on organs for the Musical Instrument Museum (MIM) in Phoenix and has made videos in Guanajuato (Mexico), Toulouse (France) and Florence (Italy) for their exhibits. An authority on the organ’s rich history over the past 2000 years, she is devoted to continuing this tradition of artistic ingenuity into the next millennium.

2024

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Organ Plus

Soprano Laura Loge and Saint Mark's Associate Organist John Stuntebeck will bring Scandinavian church music to Thomsen Chapel exploring ancient Norwegian *stevtoner*, Danish organ works, Swedish church arias, folk song and hymns, and settings of religious texts up to the present.

Friday, October 18 at 7:30 pm
Sunday, October 20 at 3:00 pm
Saint Mark's Thomsen Chapel

Shaker Harmony

Celebrating 250 Years of the Shakers in America

The Tudor Choir, directed by Doug Fullington, and Saint Mark's Women's Compline, directed by Rebekah Gilmore, will sing arrangements of Shaker hymns by Kevin Siegfried spanning the last 250 years in a celebration of their music, and their continuing peaceful, artistic, and all-welcoming movement.

Sunday, November 10 at 3:00 pm
Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

Flentrop Organ Concert

French-Canadian organist Isabelle Demers, described as playing with "precision and flair..." with "unalloyed musical joy" will bring Saint Mark's mighty Flentrop Organ to life in a varied program highlighting her virotosity, musicality, and brilliance, paired with the power and versatility of the instrument.

Friday, February 7 at 7:30 pm
Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

O Mystery of Winter Skies

James Falzone brings his unique compositional style back to Saint Mark's with an exploration of the winter night sky, the mysterious, expansive starlit beauty of God through a new, original musical composition for penny whistles, string quartet, and the medieval, stringed *vielle*, inspired by folk and celtic music.

Friday, March 7 at 7:30 pm
Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

Seven Last Words of Christ

Seattle-based Skyros Quartet will perform Joseph Haydn's own arrangement for string quartet of his *Seven Last Words of Christ* — a meditation on Jesus' utterances from the cross, excerpted from each of the four gospels — in anticipation of the coming Holy Week.

Palm Sunday, April 13 at 4:30 pm
Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

All Bach on the Flentrop Organ

Jonathan Moyer will perform Saint Mark's annual All-Bach concert. Described as "ever-expressive, stylish, and riveting," Moyer's innumerable performances on historical organs across Europe give him distinctive insight into Bach's music, which will be expanded upon further through the Flentrop organ.

Friday, May 9 at 7:30 pm
Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

For more information about Saint Mark's Music Series visit
saintmarks.org/concerts

AND FOR THE MONTHLY *Organ by Night* SERIES

Organ by Night is offered on the third Sunday of each month following the Compline service, about 10:00 pm. Informal mini-concerts introduce listeners to the power and beauty of a real pipe organ. All are welcome in-person in the nave at Saint Marks, or to join the organist in the loft to get a feel for what playing an instrument of this size is really like. Organists are delighted to answer questions about the organ and the music following the performance.

NEXT UP on SUNDAY, MAY 19 AT 10:00 pm

Wyatt Smith performing:

Prelude on Veni Creator Spiritus by Libby Larsen

Oceanic Vision by Aaron David Miller

Six Variations on a Ground Bass by Margaret Sandresky



American concert organist **Wyatt Smith** is a native of Rapid City, South Dakota. He performs with “nuance, polish, and personality” (Michael Barone, APM Pipedreams). Wyatt concertizes extensively, keeping an active concert schedule throughout the United States and Europe, including concerts in 28 states, Germany, France, and England. Additionally, his performances and recordings have been heard on ten episodes of American Public Media’s Pipedreams.

Dr. Smith serves concurrently as Instructor of Organ & Harpsichord at the Epiphany Music Academy in Seattle and as the Affiliate Artist in Organ & Harpsichord at the University of Puget Sound.

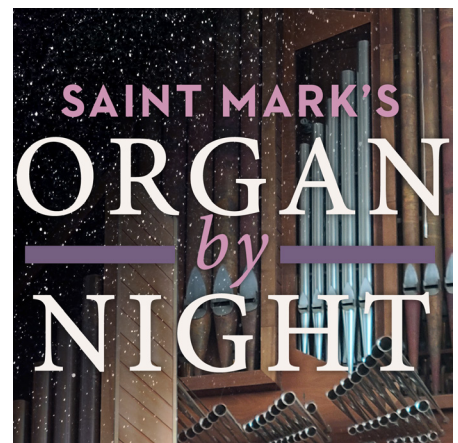
Dr. Smith holds degrees in organ performance from the University of Washington (DMA), Yale University (MM), and the University of South Dakota (BM). His primary teachers have included Dr. Carole Terry, Dr. Martin Jean, and Dr. Larry Schou.

MORE UPCOMING *Organ by Night* CONCERTS:

JUNE 16 - Julian Petrallia

JULY 21 - James Walton

AUGUST 18 - Mark McDonald



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The donor listing below reflects gifts received between June 15, 2023, and April 21, 2024, for this current season. With gratitude we acknowledge these Friends of the Music Series who give annually in support of making Saint Mark’s musical riches accessible to all:



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