

THE SAINT MARK'S
MUSIC

SERIES
2023-2024



Flentrop Organ Concert

James Kealey, organ

Friday, February 2, 7:30 pm

In-person and Livestreamed from
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.

Flentrop Organ Concert

James Kealey, organ

PROGRAM

Prelude and Fugue in G major, BWV 550

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Five Short Pieces

Percy Whitlock (1903-1946)

Allegretto

Folk Tune

First Flight

Cecilia McDowall (b. 1951)

Rhapsody No. 1 in D-flat major

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Humoresque, Op. 77

Rachel Laurin (1961-2023)

In quiet mood

Florence Price (1887-1953)

On the name MAURICE DURUFLÉ

David Hurd (b.1950)

Prelude, adagio et choral varie sur le theme 'Veni Creator,' Op. 4

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

PROGRAM NOTES

Johann Sebastian Bach was not only a highly regarded composer during his lifetime, but a revered organist, too. His abilities to improvise was legendary and traveled throughout Germany as a sought-after ‘examiner’ of new instruments and as a recitalist. *Prelude and Fugue in G Major (BWV 550)*, a relatively early work written during the composer’s tenure as organist at Arnstadt (1703-1707). “The sound should come bouncing into the church and sweep you along,” says organist Matthias Haviga regarding the youthful vitality and dancelike quality of this music. The Prelude begins with a single voice which announces its presence with childlike exuberance. Suddenly, the other voices “come out to play,” piling on top of this initial statement, and launching a whimsical musical game based entirely on the opening four-note motif. An *alla breve* fugue swiftly follows, continuing the playfulness heard in the prelude with a bounce like arpeggiated theme. The final bars of the fugue arrive at a climax of pure sunshine.

The organ music of **Percy Whitlock**, much of which can be described as ‘miniatures’, often sits between two genres that speak to the duality of his musical career. On one hand, we see the work of a church organist in the refined and more serious works, and on the other, the fun, and lighthearted writing of the Bournemouth Pavilion Organist. This duality can be seen in these two shorter pieces; *Allegretto* and *Folk Tune* (from his Five Short Pieces). *Allegretto* is the opening of the set; with seaside flare, a bouncing pedal line, and an attractive melody, one cannot imagine a piece better suited to the Pavilion organ. On the other hand, *Folk Tune* is much more solemn and sombre, with a haunting, meandering melody that pervades the work, heard from different solos on the organ.

First Flight (2019) by famed British composer **Cecilia McDowall**, was commissioned for Music Ministry of Bruton Parish in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, upon the competition of their new Dobson pipe organ. 2019 happened to mark two important events; fifty years since the moon landing, and 500 years since the death of Leonardo da Vinci. Until the nineteenth century, da Vinci was generally known only

as a painter. It was only after 1800 that records of his insatiable curiosity about a vast array of subjects came to light. Among the many subjects Leonardo studied, the possibility of human mechanical flight held particular fascination. He produced more than 35,000 words and 500 sketches dealing with flying machines, the nature of air, and bird flight. This work starts low in the register, grounded and weighted. Over the course of the work, the organ and music lifts off the ground, and takes flight until the final affirming ending in D major.

Three Rhapsodies were composed during World War One by the British composer **Herbert Howells**. Howells’ compositions include several sets of canticles, Mass settings, sacred anthems, and organ works, some of which are based on scripture. Yet, *Rhapsody No. 1* in D-flat major takes its impetus not from the sacred sphere, but perhaps a viewpoint during the horrors of the world during the war, just one year after it began. More personally, Howells was diagnosed with Graves’ disease in the same year (1915). We see both the pain and anguish in his writing, alongside quiet optimism for the future, both personally, and for the world. The work begins in the warm glow of D-flat major, on the quietest stops of the organ, before a hopeful and vibrant climax in the middle of the piece on full organ at the extremities of the keyboard. As soon as we reach the climax, the piece slowly falls into a sense resignation, and perhaps defeat as it meanders its way to a quiet, and contemplative end.

Canadian organist and composer **Rachel Laurin** is known for her virtuosic and characterful pieces, with organ works representing the majority of her compositional output. *Humoresque* (Op. 77) is an étude, a musical work showcasing the skills of the composer and performer, and is dedicated to Marcel Dupré, a famed twentieth-century French organist and composer. This work, written for, and dedicated to Isabelle Demers takes its inspiration from the second movement of Dupré’s *Suite Bretonne*; the *Fileuse*. Laurin’s perpetual motion work opens almost identically to the *Fileuse*, interspersed with quotes from Dupré’s *B major Prelude & Fugue*, Op. 7.

PROGRAM NOTES

(continued)

Florence Price stands out as one of the most distinguished individuals to arise from the rich and varied musical traditions of African American music, and holds several important distinctions. Educated at the New England Conservatory, Price was active in Chicago for the majority of her life. Over 300 works exist; concerti, symphonies, art song, chamber music, and works for solo instruments. Only as recently as 2009 were some pieces discovered, in a house Price had used as a summer home on the outskirts of St. Anne, Illinois. Alex Ross stated in *The New Yorker* in February of 2018, "not only did Price fail to enter the canon [during her life]; a large quantity of her music came perilously close to obliteration."

In quiet mood is a standalone piece among her output for solo organ. The work is undergirded by calmly oscillating harmonies, with a long and cantabile melody standing in the foreground. As the piece progresses, the harmonic language becomes increasingly sumptuous and complex, giving the effect of a kaleidoscope of colors and timbres. A return of the simple and earthy original melody signals a return to calm and repose, and a luscious final conclusion. The piece stands as an excellent example of Price's ability to seamlessly combine the traditions of Western music with her native musical style in a genuinely unique and beautiful manner.

A prize winning organist and composer, **David Hurd** is one of the finest church and concert organists of our generation. *On the name 'MAURICE DURUFLÉ'* takes its thematic impetus by ascribing a musical note to each letter of the alphabet (a

technique used by J. S. Bach, and countless others), much like Maurice Duruflé employs in his well known 'Prelude and Fugue sur le nom d'ALAIN', paying tribute to French organist and composer Jehan Alain who was killed in World War Two. Within the five short sections of this work, the pitches that spell out MAURICE DURUFLÉ are utilized in various contexts, some of which allude to the musical ideas and evocative harmonies of Duruflé himself, paying homage to the great French organist of the twentieth century.

In 1926, just one year before he was to become Louis Vierne's assistant at Notre-Dame de Paris, **Maurice Duruflé** wrote a set of variations on a liturgical theme, which he himself playing in his own concerts. Four years later, the famed composition competition *Les Amis de l'Orgue* required of its competitors a three movement work. Duruflé composed the two preceding movements to the variations, and won the prize with his *Prélude, Adagio, et Choral varié sur le thème du 'Veni Creator'*, on the great Pentecost hymn, Veni Creator Spiritus (Come Holy Ghost, our heart's inspire). The thematic material for the first two movements are derived from various phrases of the hymn, but it is not yet heard in its full entirety. After some twelve minutes of quiet music, a sudden rush of mighty wind builds towards the end of the Adagio to a triumphant climax, before dying out as quickly as it began, giving way to a radiant and glorious statement of the full hymn, followed by three short variations, and a most triumphant toccata-finale.

Support for this concert comes, in part, from the Seattle chapter of the American Guild of Organists.



ABOUT THE ARTIST



Winner of the First Prize and Audience Prize at the 2022 American Guild of Organists' National Young Artists Competition in Organ performance (NYACOP), James Kealey is a young artist of great distinction who has appeared in recital in England, the U.S.A., and in Europe.

Previous highlight engagements include recitals at Westminster Abbey UK; Methuen Memorial Music Hall, MA; St John the Divine, NYC, the Spreckels Organ Pavilion, and recitals for many AGO chapters around the country. Performances this season include stops in Dubuque IA, Buffalo NY, Naples FL, Philadelphia PA, Seattle WA, Charlotte NC, Houston TX, two recitals in Hawaii, and a solo organ recital at the 2024 National Convention of the American Guild of Organists in San Francisco.

A native of Great Britain, James came to the U.S.A. having held positions at notable English Cathedrals. He received his undergraduate degree from Royal Holloway, University of London, and worked as Senior Organ Scholar to the Chapel Choir there in their series of live broadcasts, international tours, CD recordings, weekly services, and concerts.

In the spring of 2020, James completed his Master of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music in Organ Performance and Literature. In 2021 he was honored to be named one of The Diapason's "20 under 30", an accolade awarded to the most successful young artists in the field.

In the summer of 2023, his debut CD "Rhapsodic" was released on the Pro Organo recording label. Performed on the incredible E. & G. G. Hook & Hastings / Andover organ at St. Joseph's Cathedral, Buffalo NY, it features works by Whitlock, Delius, Price, Howells, Vierne, Still, and Franck.

Currently, James serves as full time Interim Director of Music/Organist at Third Presbyterian Church in Rochester, NY. In this capacity he directs the Chancel Choir and the Third Church Choristers. Alongside this position, James is a candidate for the Doctor of Music Arts degree at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY in the studio of Prof. David Higgs.

James is represented in North America by Karen McFarlane Artists, Inc.

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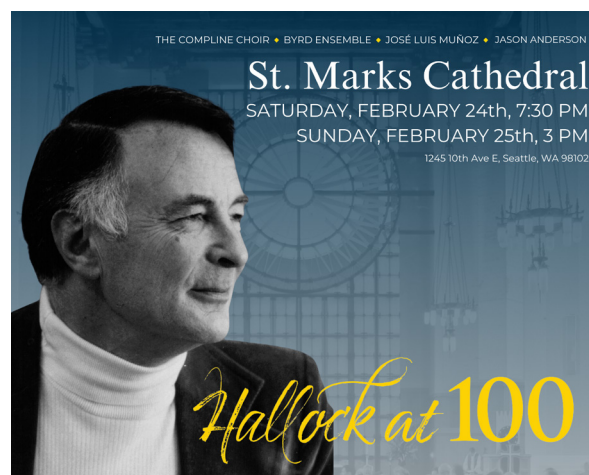
Hallock at 100

Saturday, February 24 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, February 25 at 3:00 pm

(TWO IDENTICAL PERFORMANCES)

These concerts, featuring **The Compline Choir**, the **Byrd Ensemble**, acclaimed countertenor **José Luis Muñoz**, and a parley of instruments, will launch the centenary year of Peter Hallock's birth. Programs will include music spanning the Renaissance to the present day, along with a selection of Hallock's own compositions, and a song cycle for countertenor.



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AND FOR THE MONTHLY *Organ by Night* SERIES

Organ by Night is presented at Saint Mark's Cathedral on the third Sunday of each month following the Compline service, about 10:00 pm. Informal mini-concerts will introduce you to the power and beauty of a real pipe organ. All are welcome in-person in the nave or join the organist in the loft to get a feel for what playing an instrument of this size is like. Ask questions and learn more about the Flentrop organ after the concert.

NEXT UP on SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Susanna Valleau performing:

Variations on "Jesu, Dulcis Memoria" by Jessica French

Arietta by Thomas H. Kerr

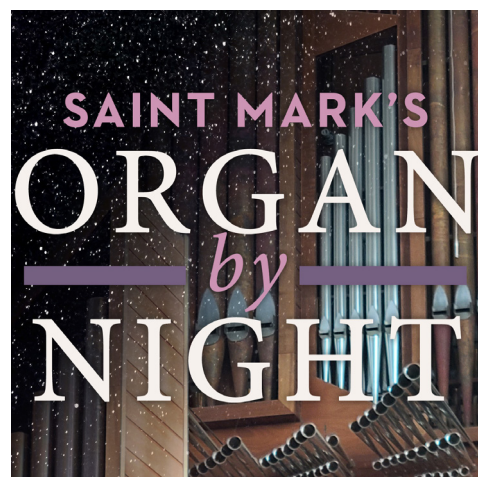
Five Sacred Dances by Margaret Vardell Sandresky

Susanna Valleau is a Seattle-based organist, pianist, and music teacher, living her dream of building a career entirely through music. She serves as music director of St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church in Shoreline, Washington, where she proudly plays the newly installed Ortloff organ. As a solo performer on the organ, she has appeared at regional and national conventions of the American Guild of Organists, as well as in concerts throughout the United States. Susanna is on faculty with the Seattle Girls' Choir, maintains an active piano and organ studio, and collaborates regularly as an accompanist and in chamber music settings on piano, harpsichord, and organ.

MORE UPCOMING *Organ by Night* CONCERTS:

MARCH 17 - Kyle Haugen

APRIL 21 - Chris Stroh



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