

Juilliard Organists

Juilliard





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The Juilliard School
presents

Juilliard Organists

Students of Paul Jacobs

Thursday, March 27, 2025, 7pm
Riverside Church, 490 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10027

Ethan Chow, Cecily Demarco, Jacob Gruss, Marco Jimenez, Isaac Lee, Alex Leonardi,
Aletheia Teague, Raphael Attila Vogl, Eddie Zheng

CARL MARIA VON WEBER
(1786–1826)

Overture from *Der Freischutz* (arr. Vogl)
Raphael Attila Vogl, Organ

ANONYMOUS
(c. 14th century)

Estampie from the *Robertsbridge Codex*
Eddie Zheng, Organ

JOHN RUTTER
(b. 1945)

Variations on an Easter Theme (O Filii et Filiae)
Aletheia Teague, Organ
Eddie Zheng, Organ

MARCO JIMENEZ
(b. 2003)

The Light Beyond Our Stars (World premiere)
Bowie Ma, Viola and Dancer
Marco Jimenez, Organ

JEANNE DEMESSIEUX
(1921–68)

Te Deum, Op. 11
Jacob Gruss, Organ

JOHN IRELAND
(1879-1962)

Capriccio
Cecily Demarco, Organ

HENRI TOMASI
(1901-71)

Semaine Sainte à Cuzco
Vincent Yim, Trumpet
Isaac Lee, Organ

Program continues

Please make certain that all electronic devices are turned off during the performance. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not permitted in this auditorium.

LOUIS VIERNE
(1870–1937)

Adagio from Symphony No. 3, Op. 28
Ethan Chow, Organ

CALVIN HAMPTON
(1938–84)

From Five Dances: “The Primitives” and “At the Ballet”
Aletheia Teague, Organ
Kailei Sin*, Dancer

JOHN WEAVER
(1937–2021)

Passacaglia on a Theme by Dunstable
Alex Leonardi, Organ

* *Juilliard alum*

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes, without an intermission

About the Program by David Crean

CARL MARIA VON WEBER Overture from *Der Freischutz*

Born between Beethoven and Schubert, Carl Maria von Weber was at the forefront of the Romantic movement in music. While many of his concert pieces (including the two popular clarinet concertos) are essentially Classical in orientation, his operas blazed a decidedly new trail and were hugely influential on later composers, especially those from German-speaking regions.

In the 18th century, opera librettos were typically written in French or Italian. The German operatic genre was the singspiel, characterized by spoken dialogue, fantastic elements, and a generally lighthearted tone, as in Mozart's *The Abduction From the Seraglio* and *The Magic Flute*. Weber's *Der Freischutz*, the tale of a desperate huntsman who makes a pact with the devil to win a shooting contest, premiered in 1821, while Weber was the director of the Dresden Opera. It is grounded in the singspiel tradition—it uses spoken dialogue rather than sung recitative—but also looks forward to composers like Berlioz and Wagner with its new dramatic intensity and elaborately staged fantasy elements. Wagner grew up in Dresden, and it was his early encounters with Weber and *Der Freischutz* that inspired him to pursue opera composition. The complete opera is infrequently staged in the U.S., but the dramatic overture is a popular concert piece.

**Carl Maria
von Weber**

Born:
November 18, 1786,
in Eutin, Germany

Died:
June 5, 1826,
in London

ANONYMOUS Estampie from the *Robertsbridge Codex*

The pipe organ is thought to have been invented by the Greek engineer Ctesibius of Alexandria in the third century BCE. Much of its history over the next millennium is poorly understood, including how it came to be the musical instrument of Christian worship services in Western Europe. Yet it was firmly established in this role by 12th century; medieval sources describe instruments of hundreds of pipes being pumped by dozens of men.

Anonymous

c. 14th century,
in England

The music played on these early instruments was probably largely improvised or, in the later middle ages, based on polyphonic vocal models like motets and chansons. The earliest extant source of keyboard music, the *Robertsbridge Codex*, dates from about 1360 and was written in England. It consists of only two sheets in a larger nonmusical volume, and contains four complete pieces—two estampies and two arrangements of vocal pieces—as well as two fragments. The estampie was a medieval dance found in both instrumental and vocal forms. In practice, the instrumental estampie consisted of several sets of *puncti*, each of which was repeated twice with the same two endings, one musically “open,” the other “closed.” The *Robertsbridge* examples generally feature a two-part texture except at cadences, and the harmonies are dominated by parallel perfect consonances, a common technique in older vocal music of the Notre Dame School.

JOHN RUTTER
Variations on an Easter Theme (O Filii et Filiae)

John Rutter

Born:
September 24, 1945,
in London

John Rutter is one of the most performed living composers, particularly noted for his contributions to choral music. He has long been associated with Cambridge University—first as a student, then as music director of Clare College, and finally as conductor of his own Cambridge Singers—and his works are regularly selected for inclusion in the yearly Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at King’s College. He was made a commander of the British Empire in 2007 for his contributions to music.

Many of Rutter’s choral works feature skillfully handled organ accompaniments, but he has unfortunately written only a handful of pieces for organ alone. *Variations on an Easter Theme* consists of six variations written for two performers at one console, based on a 15th-century Easter hymn still commonly sung to the English text “O Sons and Daughters.” The first two variations are toccata-like, with the clearly heard theme accompanied by improvisatory flourishes. Variation 3 offers a quiet respite with blues-inflected harmonies before a brief return of boisterous virtuosity in variation 4. Variation 5, the longest of the set, is again subdued and even more jazzy than the third. The final variation offers an appropriately joyous conclusion.

MARCO JIMENEZ
The Light Beyond Our Stars

Marco Jimenez

Born:
January 7, 2003,
in St. Petersburg,
Florida

BCJ exchange composition and organ student Marco Jimenez provides the following note for his world premiere work, *The Light Beyond Our Stars*:

The Light Beyond Our Stars is meant to evoke the eternity and timelessness of the realm that lies beyond our own. The piece opens with a somber melody played on the unaccompanied viola. We might consider this melody as a transition between our realm and the next one. After we hear this lonely, yearning melody for awhile, we suddenly hear luminous chords in the organ. The viola responds, and we are gently ushered into the light beyond our stars—the viola and organ playing in concord.

The remainder of the piece is a meditation on this realm, a glimpse of that which we cannot see, an impression of that we cannot hear. Near the end of the piece, alongside mystical chords in the organ, the violist puts down her instrument and begins to dance—an attempt to express through movement and sound that which is inexpressible.

At the end of the piece, we hear the melody that opened the piece play once again, still in the solo viola ... We are now going even farther beyond the realm beyond our stars—into something newer, stranger. What lies beyond?

JEANNE DEMESSIEUX

Te Deum

Jeanne Demessieux was one of the great trailblazers of the organ world as the first woman to achieve international renown as a concert organist in a field historically dominated by men. Initially a pianist, she entered the organ class of Marcel Dupré at the Paris Conservatory in 1936 and quickly became his star pupil and protégé. An outstandingly gifted musician, she performed more than 700 recitals in her all-too-brief career and composed some of the most difficult works ever written for the instrument.

As with many French organ works, Demessieux's *Te Deum* began as an improvisation, performed as part of a 1955 recital at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Much of the piece is derived from the opening E-G-A motive of the *Te deum* plainchant, though the harmonic language is decidedly modern and might be described as freely polytonal. Longer chant quotations are scattered throughout, although they are often obscured through inversion (intervals reversed—essentially played upside down) or retrograding (played backward).

Jeanne Demessieux

Born:

February 13, 1921,
in Montpellier,
France

Died:

November 11, 1968,
in Paris

JOHN IRELAND

Capriccio

For English musicians of the late 19th century, an organ position was one of the most reliable ways to generate a constant (though often minimal) income. Even Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst, not now remembered for their abilities as organists, received some instruction at the Royal College of Music and held organ jobs. Their younger RCM contemporary John Ireland followed a similar path, and at one point was a colleague of Vaughan Williams at St Barnabas, South Lambeth. He subsequently moved on to Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, and finally to St. Luke's, Sydney Street, where he remained until 1926.

Ireland was known in his own time mainly for his songs, piano music, and a few orchestral pieces, but it is his church music that has achieved greater posthumous success, including the Easter anthem "Greater Love." He wrote most of his relatively few organ works during his long tenure at St. Luke's, although not necessarily for himself. The *Capriccio* of 1911 was dedicated to his former Holy Trinity colleague H.L. Balfour (not to be confused with H. Balfour Gardiner). Cast in a single sonata-form movement, it demonstrates the strong foundation in classical forms he received from his teacher C.V. Stanford, as well as his familiarity with more forward-looking composers like Richard Strauss and Claude Debussy.

John Ireland

Born:

August 13, 1879,
in Bowdon, U.K.

Died:

June 12, 1962,
in Washington, U.K.

HENRI TOMASI

Semaine Sainte à Cuzco

Henri Tomasi

Born:

August 17, 1901,
in Marseille, France

Died:

January 13, 1971,
in Paris

Described by a classmate as “an inveterate workaholic,” Henri Tomasi pursued dual careers as composer and conductor. His work as a conductor began shortly after he graduated from the Paris Conservatory, and he was particularly highly regarded for his operatic interpretations. Unlike that of other conductors, however, Tomasi’s compositional output was prolific and steady. His travels also informed his compositional style, and he maintained an interest in world music throughout his life. As a composer he is particularly remembered for his music for wind and brass instruments, including concertos for horn, clarinet, trombone, bassoon, oboe, and flute.

Semaine Sainte à Cuzco (*Holy Week in Cuzco*, 1962) is one of several works inspired by South American (particularly Incan) culture. Cuzco is a city in southern Peru that was the last capital of the Incan empire. On the Monday of Holy Week, a 16th-century statue of Jesus, Señor de los Temblores (Lord of the Tremors)—believed to have reduced damage during a 1650 earthquake and regarded as the patron of Cuzco—is taken in procession through the city. Scored for trumpet and organ and dedicated to Maurice André, *Semaine Sainte à Cuzco* is structured in three sections, with a central lyrical episode bookended by boisterous, polytonal fanfares.

LOUIS VIERNE

Adagio from Symphony No. 3

Louis Vierne

Born:

October 8, 1870,
in Poitiers, France

Died:

June 2, 1937,
in Paris

Although his life seemed an almost unbroken series of tragedies, Louis Vierne was lucky with regard to his teachers. From Cesar Franck he inherited a peerless command of chromatic harmony, an appreciation of cyclic form, and an understated emotional intensity. Through Charles-Marie Widor, he gained an organ technique that allowed for the expression of his artistic vision. In other respects, he was less fortunate: Vierne was born nearly blind and was almost always in poor health; his marriage collapsed due to his wife’s unfaithfulness; his professional aspirations were repeatedly scuttled by petty squabbles (not of his making); and his son and brother both died in World War I. Therefore, Vierne’s music is often intense and poignantly expressive, with a post-tonal musical language that owes much to Franck while also showing the clear imprint of Debussy.

Organ symphonies are essentially large-scale sonatas. The “symphonic” appellation was applied due to the timbral diversity and symphonic character of Aristide Cavaillé-Coll’s organs, which have fired the imagination of French organists since the mid-19th century. Vierne’s third was written in 1911, one of the most difficult years in his life, when his grief over the dual deaths of his mother and his mentor Alexandre Guilmant was compounded by the crushing fact that he was not named Guilmant’s successor. The penultimate movement is a mournful, tripartite adagio that was often featured on Vierne’s own recital programs.

CALVIN HAMPTON
From Five Dances: “The Primitives” and “At the Ballet”

Part of the same generation as John Weaver and Gerre Hancock, Calvin Hampton had a career tragically curtailed by his death during the AIDS epidemic. A graduate of Oberlin Conservatory and Syracuse University, Hampton served for 20 years as organist at Calvary Episcopal Church in Gramercy Park, where he became one of the most respected church musicians in the country. Shortly before his death, he was described as “the greatest living composer of hymn tunes,” many of which are still in hymnals. He was known for his Fridays at Midnight concert series, a forward-looking and popular venture which ran from 1974 to 1983.

Many of Hampton’s compositions were written during the last decade of his life, including the popular Five Dances of 1982. Each dance features a melodic line accompanied by an ostinato: a rhythmic and melodic motive continuously repeated with little or no variation. The first of the set, “The Primitives,” is deliberately jagged, with occasional tone clusters. “At the Ballet” utilizes the ancient technique of *hocket*, where a single florid line is divided between two voices—in this case, the hands. The pedal melody, played on a solo two-foot stop, actually sounds above the manuals.

JOHN WEAVER
Passacaglia on a Theme by Dunstable

John Weaver (faculty 1987-2004) was one of the most highly regarded organists and pedagogues of the 20th century. A student of Alexander McCurdy at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, Weaver succeeded him as head of the organ department, from 1972 to 2003. Weaver also served as the organist of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church for 35 years and chaired the Juilliard organ department. In addition to performing, teaching, and conducting, Weaver wrote music for organ, organ and flute, and choir.

Originating in the 17th century, the passacaglia is a stately triple-meter dance based on a repeated theme that usually begins in the bass. Weaver’s theme is the “Agincourt Carol,” an English folksong written in the early 15th century to celebrate Henry V’s victory in the 1415 battle of Agincourt, during the Hundred Years War. It is sometimes attributed to English composer John Dunstable, thanks largely to a popular arrangement made by 20th-century organist E. Power Biggs. Closer to a theme and variations than a true passacaglia, Weaver’s work subjects the gothic-hued melody to a series of inventive and decidedly modern transformations that demonstrate his familiarity with a broad range of styles and techniques.

David Crean, who teaches organ at Wright State University in Ohio, is a graduate of the C.V. Starr doctoral program at Juilliard and was the recipient of the 2014 Richard F. French doctoral prize.

Calvin Hampton

Born:
December 31, 1938,
in Kittanning,
Pennsylvania

Died:
August 5, 1984,
in Port Charlotte,
Florida

John Weaver

Born:
April 27, 1937,
in Mauch Chunk,
Pennsylvania

Died:
February 1, 2021,
in Ithaca, New York

About the Juilliard Organ Department

Led by renowned organist Paul Jacobs, Juilliard's organ department enjoys an outstanding reputation, attracting talented young artists from around the world. Organ students at Juilliard work closely with Jacobs and enjoy many opportunities for solo and ensemble performances. Juilliard organists perform in Alice Tully Hall on its restored Kuhn organ, are featured in recitals at churches throughout New York City, and hold prominent church positions in the New York City area and around the country. Weekly performance classes attract a regular stream of interested visitors. In addition to lessons and master classes, organ majors take courses in service playing, organ literature, and improvisation. Juilliard houses several pipe organs in various styles, including instruments by Holtkamp, Schoenstein, Flentrop, and Noack.

About the Riverside Church



THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Located in Morningside Heights, where the Upper West Side meets Harlem, the Riverside Church in the City of New York is one of the leading voices of Progressive Christianity, influential on America's religious and political landscapes for more than 90 years. Built by John D. Rockefeller Jr. and led by senior minister Adriene Thorne, the interracial, interdenominational, and international church has long been a forum for important civic and spiritual leaders, including Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, Bill Clinton, the Dalai Lama, and countless others.

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