

MUSIC at DUKE CHAPEL *presents*

# Organ Recital Series

ROBERT PARKINS, *director*

# ROBERT PARKINS

*Music for the Season of Lent*

MEMORIAL CHAPEL ORGAN  
(BROMBAUGH 1997)

THE BENJAMIN N. DUKE  
MEMORIAL ORGAN  
(FLENTROP 1976)

Sunday, March 17, 2024, 5:00 p.m.  
Duke University Chapel



# Music for the Season of Lent

*Please reserve applause until the end of each half of the recital.*

## I

Selections from *Fiori musicali*

GIROLAMO FRESCOBALDI  
(1583–1643)

Toccata avanti la Messa della Madonna

Kyrie – Christe – Kyrie (five organ versets)\*

Ricercar con obbligo di cantare la quinta parte senza toccarla\*

Ricercar dopo il Credo

*\*Assisted by Gwen Hyland, cantor*

Tiento de 4° tono de falsas

SEBASTIÁN AGUILERA DE HEREDIA  
(1565–1627)

Pange lingua de 5° tono

PABLO BRUNA  
(1611–1679)

Tiento de 2° tono sobre la letanía de la Virgen

MEMORIAL CHAPEL ORGAN (BROMBAUGH 1997)

*There will be a brief pause while the audience moves to the nave.*



## II

Chorale Prelude on “O Traurigkeit, o Herzeleid”

JOHANNES BRAHMS  
(1833–1897)

O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig, BWV 656

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH  
(1685–1750)

Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit, BWV 672

Christe, aller Welt Trost, BWV 673

Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist, BWV 674

Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist, BWV 671

Fantasy and Fugue in C Minor, BWV 537

THE BENJAMIN N. DUKE MEMORIAL ORGAN (FLENTROP 1976)

## PROGRAM NOTES

*Fiori musicali* (“Musical Flowers”), **Girolamo Frescobaldi’s** only collection of exclusively liturgical organ music, was published in 1635. The three Mass cycles contained in this volume consist of Kyrie settings for the Ordinary plus additional organ music to be performed at specific points during the Mass. The selections performed today are from the **Messa della Madonna**, designated for use during “all feasts and solemnities of the Virgin.”

The **Toccata** “before the Mass,” hardly longer than an intonation to introduce the pitch to the singer(s), serves as a brief prelude to the service. Immediately following are several organ versets to be played in alternation with verses of the sung **Kyrie eleison – Christe eleison – Kyrie eleison** (Lord, Have Mercy – Christ, Have Mercy – Lord, Have Mercy), the only section of the Ordinary to be included by Frescobaldi. The composer’s organ versets, drawing motives and themes from the corresponding Gregorian chant (Mass IX: *Cum júbilo*), are masterful miniatures of imitative counterpoint.

Unlike a toccata, the keyboard *ricercar* emphasizes the stricter rules of imitative polyphony. One of two included in this Mass is a **Ricercar** (in five voices) stipulating that the fifth part must be sung rather than played; a repeated melodic formula (based on the initial subject) is to be inserted in musically appropriate places at the discretion of the performer. Frescobaldi implies that he has, in fact, devised a kind of musical riddle when he adds this footnote: “Intendomi chi può che m’intend’io” (Understand me if you can, for I understand myself). Although several appropriate texts might be used to sing the six-note *ostinato* (a–c<sup>1</sup>–c<sup>1</sup>–b–e<sup>1</sup>–a), we have chosen the phrase “Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis” (Holy

Mary, pray for us). After a full cadence at the precise midpoint of this contrapuntal marvel, Frescobaldi introduces two additional subjects to complement the first.

Specified as a musical interlude for a particular point in the Mass is the **Ricercar dopo il Credo**, to be played after the recitation of the Creed. The ascending chromatic scale in the main subject is distinctive but not as unusual as the initial motive: a rising minor sixth (g<sup>1</sup>–eb<sup>2</sup>). The subject also appears in augmentation (consisting of equal long notes) in the second section, once in each of the four voices.

**Sebastián Aguilera de Heredia** was the first significant Spanish organist-composer from the Aragonese school. Aguilera, who assumed the position of master organist at La Seo in Saragossa (Zaragoza) in 1603, witnessed the expansion of the keyboard *tiento* into several distinct types. The title of his second **Tiento de falsas** (in mode 4) is among the first to include the term *falsas*, dissonant suspended notes that permeate this languid, meditative style appropriate to the Elevation of the Host during Communion.

**Pablo Bruna**, lauded in an obituary as “the most renowned musician in Spain,” was sightless and known during his lifetime as “the blind man from Daroca.” In 1631, he was appointed organist of the Collegiate Church in that small town in Aragon, and he remained there until his death. Bruna’s **Pange lingua** (in mode 5) is a brief setting of the Good Friday hymn “Sing, My Tongue, the Savior’s Glory.” Rather than the more familiar chant from the Roman liturgy, the melody for the “Spanish” *Pange lingua* was derived from Mozarabic chant and rhythmicized

into a folklike tune in ABA form. Organ pieces belonging to this Iberian subgenre are typically in three voices: the long notes of the bass *cantus firmus* in this case are played by the left hand, pitted against an imitative duet for the right hand.

Bruna's **Tiento on the Litany of the Virgin**, evidently intended to be played on divided stops (although not indicated in the title), is quite possibly his most alluring work. It begins with paired imitation of the theme in all parts, but contrapuntal independence in the lower voices soon dissipates as the treble pair assume the more prominent role. What follows is a loose set of continuous variations generated by the opening subject and its implied harmonic scheme, which crystallizes only later in the piece (i-V-i-III-i-iv-V).

In 1858, years before he was to focus on things eternal in his *Eleven Chorale Preludes*, **Johannes Brahms** had already written a beautiful **Chorale Prelude on "O Traurigkeit, o Herzeleid"** (O Sadness, O Heartbreak). This hymn is often sung on Good Friday and at burial services. Brahms penned a fugue based on this melody sometime later, and a revised version of the short chorale prelude followed by the fugue was published in 1882 as a musical supplement to a German music periodical (*Musikalisches Wochenblatt*).

**Johann Sebastian Bach's** expansive setting of **O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig** (O Lamb of God, Innocent) is associated with Passiontide, and this chorale was chosen by the composer to serve as a treble descant that soars above the magnificent opening chorus of the *St. Matthew Passion*. An extended prelude from the composer's "Great Eighteen" chorales, it consists of three full verses. The *cantus firmus* is somewhat embellished in the top

voice for the first verse, then presented more plainly in the middle voice (alto) for the second, and stated most clearly and forcefully in the bass (where the pedal finally makes its entrance) for the third verse. Particularly salient is Bach's wrenching chromatic harmony on the word "despair" (*verzagen*) as a segue to the final phrase ("Give us your peace, o Jesus").

In 1739, Bach published the third of four collections he named *Clavierübung* ("Keyboard Practice"). Part III includes chorale preludes based on the Lutheran Mass and Catechism sandwiched between an imposing prelude and corresponding fugue. For each chorale, the composer provided one large setting with pedal as well as at least one smaller prelude for hands alone (*manualiter*). The tunes for the **Kyrie – Christe – Kyrie** group were derived from older Gregorian chant (Mass II: *Kyrie fons bonitatis*); however, the complete chorale melodies are never quoted in Bach's three short *manualiter* settings. Rather, a subject is distilled from the opening phrase of each to generate an imitative piece resembling a *fughetta*, although not in the strictest sense. The three titles of the troped German versions may be translated as follows: Lord Have Mercy, God Eternal Father – Christ Have Mercy, Hope of the World – Lord Have Mercy, God Holy Spirit.

The large setting of **Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist** (Lord Have Mercy, God Holy Spirit) was designated by Bach to be played *cum organo pleno* (with the full organ). Imitative counterpoint in longer note values is a tribute to the "old style" (*stile antico*) developed by the Renaissance polyphonic masters. The seminal three-note "Kyrie motive" and its inversion appear at the very outset, in addition to other points of imitation based on the chant. (Frescobaldi employed a similar technique on a smaller scale in his Kyrie versets heard earlier.) Although Bach wrote

*Canto fermo in Basso* in the heading, the attentive listener needs no hint to locate the chorale tune in the pedal line. The final phrase, an intensely chromatic treatment of the word *eleison* (have mercy), is extraordinary.

J. S. Bach's **Fantasy and Fugue in C Minor** begins with a darkly brooding Fantasy centered around two different themes in four alternating sections. The first begins with a motive that recalls the rising minor sixth ( $g^1-e^b^2$ ) in Frescobaldi's *Ricercar dopo il Credo*. The second theme is characterized by descending "sigh" motives, usually associated with laments. The much more assertive Fugue employs two themes as well: the

principal subject as well as a rising chromatic second subject that is nearly identical to the tail of the main subject in the Frescobaldi *ricercar*. (These striking similarities are not likely to be purely coincidental; Bach owned a copy of the *Fiori musicali*, which he had painstakingly copied by hand for his own use.) The three-part structure of this fugue is unusual for J. S. Bach, with a contrasting middle section in which the original subject gives way to the new chromatic subject. When the first subject reenters in a modified recapitulation, the second one simply disappears.

—Notes by Robert Parkins

## ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Robert Parkins is the University Organist and a Professor of the Practice of Music at Duke University. He first assumed the position of Chapel Organist at Duke in 1975, then joined the faculty of the School of Music at Ithaca College in 1982, returning to Duke in 1985.

A graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the Yale University School of Music, Dr. Parkins studied organ with Gerre Hancock, Charles Krigbaum, and Michael Schneider, as well as harpsichord with Ralph Kirkpatrick.

As a Fulbright scholar, he pursued further organ study with Anton Heiller at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna. Publications by Dr. Parkins include articles

for *The Organ Yearbook*, *Early Music*, *The Diapason*, *The American Organist*, and *The Piano Quarterly*, as well as the chapter on "Spain and Portugal" in *Keyboard Music Before 1700* (Routledge).

His organ and harpsichord recordings have appeared on the Calcante, Gothic, Loft, Musical Heritage Society, and Naxos labels. Among them are solo CDs recorded on the Flentrop, Aeolian, and Brombaugh organs in Duke Chapel, including *Early Iberian Organ Music*, *Brahms: Complete Organ Works*, *German Romantic Organ Music*, *Iberian and South German Organ Music*, and *Organ Music of Frescobaldi. Salome's Dance*, the most recent album, features music by late German Romantic and American composers, and is available in Duke's Gothic Bookshop.



*Memorial Chapel Organ by John Brombaugh (1997)*

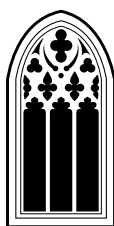
# MUSIC AT DUKE CHAPEL



*Indicates ticketed performance. Purchase at [tickets.duke.edu](https://tickets.duke.edu)*

## HOLY WEEK

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|-------------------|---|-------------------|--|
| <b>Sun Mar 24</b> | <b>Palm Sunday</b><br>11:00 a.m. Morning Worship Service<br><i>Chapel Choir</i><br>4:00 p.m. Palm Sunday Choral Evensong<br><i>Evensong Singers</i>   | <b>Sun Apr 7</b>  | J. S. Bach's St. John Passion<br>4:00 p.m. <i>Evensong Singers</i><br>& <i>Schola Cantorum</i>  |
| <b>Thu Mar 28</b> | <b>Maundy Thursday</b><br>7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service<br><i>Chapel Choir</i>  | <b>Sun Apr 14</b> | "Our First Lady of Jazz:<br>4:00 p.m. Celebrating Mary Lou Williams"<br><i>Chapel Choir</i> & <i>Guest Artists</i>   |
| <b>Fri Mar 29</b> | <b>Good Friday</b><br>11:30 a.m. Stations of the Cross<br><i>Vespers Ensemble</i><br>7:30 p.m. Good Friday Tenebrae<br><i>Chapel Choir</i>  | <b>Sun Apr 21</b> | Student Concert<br>4:00 p.m. <i>United in Praise</i>   |
| <b>Sat Mar 30</b> | <b>Holy Saturday</b><br>12:00 p.m. Organ Recital, Goodson Chapel<br><i>Katherine Johnson, Organ Scholar</i>   | <b>Sun Apr 28</b> | Choral Evensong & Carillon Recital<br>4:00 p.m. <i>Evensong Singers</i><br>5:00 p.m. <i>Jonathan Lehrer</i>  |
| <b>Sun Mar 31</b> | <b>Easter Sunday</b><br>9:00 a.m. Easter Sunday Communion Service<br><i>Chapel Choir</i><br>11:00 a.m. Easter Sunday Service<br><i>Chapel Choir</i><br>4:00 p.m. Easter Sunday Choral Evensong<br><i>Evensong Singers</i> | <b>Thu May 9</b>  | Ascension Day Evensong<br>7:00 p.m. <i>Evensong Singers</i>  |
|                   |   | <b>Sun May 19</b> | Pentecost Evensong<br>4:00 p.m. <i>Choirs from Chapel of the Cross</i><br><i>Chapel Hill, North Carolina</i>   |



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