

MUSIC AT

# Duke Chapel

## ORGAN RECITAL SERIES FALL 2021–SPRING 2022

NOVEMBER 7 5:00 PM

JANUARY 29 8:00 PM

JANUARY 30 5:00 PM

FEBRUARY 20 5:00 PM

MARCH 20 5:00 PM

# Organ Recital Series

ROBERT PARKINS, director

## ROBERT PARKINS

MARCH 20, 2022 • 5:00 PM

*J. S. Bach and His Contemporaries*

Prelude and Fugue in C Minor, BWV 549 **JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH**  
(1685–1750)

Concerto in F, Op. 4, No. 5 **GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL**  
(1685–1759)  
Larghetto  
Allegro  
Alla Siciliana  
Presto

Sonata in C Minor, K. 302 (Andante) **DOMENICO SCARLATTI**  
(1685–1757)

Sonata in C Minor, K. 303 (Allegro)

Offertoire pour le Jour de Pâques:  
*O Filii et Filiae* **JEAN-FRANÇOIS DANDRIEU**  
(c. 1682–1738)

Toccata and Fugue in E Minor (IX) **JOHANN ERNST EBERLIN**  
(1702–1762)

Entrada de clarines [antes de tocar canciones] **ANONYMOUS**  
(c. 1700?)

*Erbarm dich mein, o Herre Gott*, BWV 721 **J. S. BACH**

Prelude and Fugue in B Minor, BWV 544

THE BENJAMIN N. DUKE MEMORIAL ORGAN (FLENTROP 1976)

*Please reserve applause until the end of the program.*



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## PROGRAM NOTES

Today's program is the third in a trilogy that began with organ music by "J. S. Bach and His Predecessors" and continued last spring with "J. S. Bach and His Legacy." The first of these two recitals explored works by earlier composers who influenced Bach, and the second featured music by German Romantic figures who were influenced by him. "J. S. Bach and His Contemporaries" travels well beyond Bach's Central Germany to contemporaneous organist-composers from other musical traditions, including those of non-Germanic countries such as France, Italy, Spain, and England. Two of them—Handel and Scarlatti—share the same birth year as Bach (1685).

By the turn of the eighteenth century, when Bach was coming of age, several "national schools" of organ literature had developed in Western Europe. Even the organs themselves had acquired distinctive characteristics, already emerging in the late sixteenth century. Most of the instruments in England, Italy, and Iberia had no independent pedal division. Those in France and South Germany/Austria usually had pedalboards, but their role was far less significant than in the Central and North German areas.

**Johann Sebastian Bach's** early **Prelude and Fugue in C Minor** (BWV 549) is likely to have been written when the young organist occupied his first position at the New Church in Arnstadt (1703–1707). The brief Prelude begins with a lengthy pedal solo in the tradition of North German composers like Georg Böhm (organist at the principal church in Lüneburg, where Bach had been a student in his teens). The Fugue, however, is unusual in that the pedal does not enter until the closing section, where the strict counterpoint dissolves as it returns to the free style of the Prelude. The resulting "prelude-fugue-postlude" format resembles shorter *praeludia* by some of Bach's seventeenth-century predecessors (as well as other early pieces by Bach himself).

**George Frideric Handel**, born in Halle, Germany, moved to London in 1712 and became a British subject some fifteen years later. His *Six Concertos for the Harpsichord or Organ* were published by John Walsh (London, 1738) as solo keyboard transcriptions of the composer's Opus 4. Handel, who has been credited as the inventor of the organ concerto, completed thirteen of them, and he often performed the original versions for organ and orchestra as interludes between acts of his oratorios. Walsh's solo versions for keyboard, highly marketable to amateurs for use at home, were probably arranged by someone in his company's employ rather than by Handel himself. **Concerto No. 5** from Opus 4, originally a sonata for recorder and harpsichord, adheres to a four-movement format developed by Corelli in an alternation between slow and fast tempi. Although most organs in England had no pedals, many instruments possessed two (or sometimes three) manuals. Today's performance exploits two manual keyboards, assigning organ solo parts and orchestral *tutti* sections to different divisions. (The "winding" in the division that renders the solo passages has been set on "flexible," allowing for a subtle fluctuation in the sound characteristic of eighteenth-century English chamber organs.)

Although **Domenico Scarlatti** was born in Italy, he spent the second half of his life on the Iberian Peninsula. While in the employ of the Spanish royal family, he composed nearly 600 sonatas for keyboard, most of which were intended to be performed in pairs. Two **Sonatas in C Minor** (K. 202–203) follow his customary binary form, with each half normally repeated in performance. Only a handful of Scarlatti's sonatas were apparently intended for the organ (as indicated by registration suggestions in the score), but this pair for harpsichord fares quite well on the organ, typically a one-manual instrument with no pedal stops in eighteenth-century Spain, Portugal, and Italy. The fast triple meter of the second sonata

recalls eighteenth-century Spanish folk dances like the Aragonese *jota*, with recurring trill figures evoking the sounds of castanets and tambourines.

**Jean-François Dandrieu** belonged to the post-classical generation of French organists sometimes referred to as *noëlistes*, as variations on noëls became increasingly popular. Organist at the Church of St. Merry in Paris, Dandrieu was later appointed to the royal chapel as well. Among the works published in his *Premier Livre de Pièces d'Orgue* (1739) is his **Offertoire pour le Jour de Pâques**, a set of variations on the hymn *O Sons and Daughters* (#317 in the pew hymnal), intended to be played during the mass as an “Offertory for Easter Day.” Like many French *offertoires*, Dandrieu’s setting of *O Filii et Filiae* is an extended *Grand Dialogue* between the large and small reed choruses (plus the *Cornet* from a third division).

**Johann Ernst Eberlin**, organist (from 1727) and later Kappellmeister (1749) at Salzburg Cathedral, reflects the South German/Austrian tradition. His charming **Toccata nona** in E minor, from the last of *Nine Toccatas and Fugues* (ca. 1745), resembles no other species of keyboard toccata from the late Baroque era. The composer’s reliance on sequential repetition is a typical feature of Baroque music, although Eberlin (like Scarlatti) provides glimpses of a transition to the Rococo style. The accompanying **Fuga** in the same key features a disjunct and highly chromatic subject that omits only one of the twelve tones in the scale. In fact, it brings to mind the final fugue (in B minor) from the first volume of Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier* (1722), the subject of which includes every note of the chromatic scale.

Around the time that Bach was establishing his career in Germany, a Franciscan friar named **Antonio Martín y Coll** had been compiling numerous manuscripts by various Spanish

composers. From this collection, titled *Flores de música*, comes an anonymous **Entrada de clarines**, an “entrance” piece that calls specifically for the spectacular horizontal trumpets (*clarines*) found on nearly all eighteenth-century Spanish organs. The two *canciones* (songs) that follow feature echo effects as well, implying the use of enclosed stops and “swell” devices introduced by Spanish organ builders not long after the appearance of horizontal reeds in the latter 1600s. The three short movements are labeled *Despacio* (slow), *Grave* (serious), and *Muy aprisa* (very fast).

The “miscellaneous” prelude on the chorale ***Erbarm dich mein, o Herre Gott*** is attributed to J. S. Bach, but its authenticity is questionable. The texture of a plain *cantus firmus* above repeated chords throughout is unlike that of any other chorale prelude by Bach. One may find similar textures only rarely in chorale-based works by other composers, like Böhm, and there is even such treatment of the same chorale in a cantata by a student of Buxtehude (Ludwig Busbetzky). The chorale text, “Have Mercy upon Me, O Lord God,” is derived from the penitential Psalm 51 (for Passiontide).

Bach’s **Prelude and Fugue in B Minor** (BWV 544) dates from the period 1727–1731, during his first decade in Leipzig. It remains the only one of the “Six Great Preludes and Fugues” (BWV 543–548), published and popularized in the early nineteenth century, for which there is a complete autograph manuscript still extant. The Prelude, labeled “Praeludium in Organo pleno” in the composer’s own hand, resembles two other magisterial preludes from that group—BWV 546/1 (C minor) and BWV 548/1 (E minor)—in that it opens with a pedal point (in this case, articulated by octave leaps), as in the plaintive opening chorus of the *St. Matthew Passion*. Another salient point of commonality is the *ritornello* principle, whereby the main



thematic material returns in various related keys as it alternates with subordinate themes. But the Prelude in B Minor—suffused with heart-rending chromatic harmony and plangent dissonances—distinguishes itself from the other two at the very outset with a florid *cantilena* style introduced by the two upper voices three measures before the pedal point enters.

The accompanying Fugue is *sui generis*; there is no other Bach organ fugue quite like this one. The subject is entirely linear, consisting of stepwise motion in a serpentine configuration. (The simple four-note motive that generates the subject calls to mind a similar figure that provides rhythmic motion in the initial chorus of the *St. John*

*Passion*.) After a long episode without pedal, the concluding section of the Fugue introduces a significant new countersubject—imposing in its strength and simplicity—to accompany the principal subject. Within the dramatic final ten measures, the main subject in the pedal's last entry is tripled sequentially, like a reticulated python climbing inexorably from low F# to high b, then segues into the final statement of the new countersubject. More than a century ago, biographer Philipp Spitta wrote that in this sublime prelude and fugue Bach “strikes a chord of deep elegiac mourning such as we find nowhere else in the organ works.”

—Robert Parkins

## ROBERT PARKINS

Dr. 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 in Vienna with Anton Heiller.

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. Still available are several solo CDs featuring 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*.

The most recent album, *Salome's Dance* (recorded on Duke Chapel's Aeolian organ), includes music by late German Romantic and American composers. Digital downloads may be obtained from Loft Recordings ([www.gothic-catalog.com/product\\_p/lrcd-1147.htm](http://www.gothic-catalog.com/product_p/lrcd-1147.htm)), and CDs are available in Duke's Gothic Bookshop.

## OTHER UPCOMING CONCERTS AT DUKE CHAPEL



Sunday, April 3, at 4:00 p.m.

**Spring Oratorio: Remember and Rejoice**

Saturday, April 16, at 4:00 p.m.

**Holy Saturday Concert in Goodson Chapel**