Sacred Music at Notre Dame

Presents

"When My Spirit Grows Faint Within Me…"

A First-Year MSM Organ Recital

Anne Patterson, *organ*

Selection of Chorale Preludes — J. S. Bach (1685-1750)
Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland

BWV 659, *á 2 claviers et pédale*
BWV 660, *Trio a due bassi e canto fermo*
BWV 661, *in organo pleno/il canto fermo nel pedale*

Toccata Seconda (*Primo Libro di Toccate*, 1615) — Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)

Ciacona in E Minor, BuxWV 160 — Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Allegro, Chorale, and Fugue — Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Magnificat Quinti Toni — Heinrich Scheidemann (1596-1663)

Schola
A. J. Lyon, Zac Flasch, Paul Dinan

Psalm Sonata No. 2 — Brenda Portman (b. 1980)

1. "When my spirit grows faint within me…"
2. "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."
3. "The Lord sets prisoners free…"

Anne Patterson is a student of Dr. Kola Owolabi

Special thanks to Paul Dinan for serving as registrant and to Anastasia Hoshaw for working the bellows for the Italian organ.

Reyes Organ and Choral Hall
Friday, March 27th, 2026, 4:30pm

This is a degree recital for the Master of Sacred Music.

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Program Notes

The three *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland* settings comprise a part of Johann Sebastian Bach's Great Eighteen Chorale Preludes, a set for solo organ compiled in Leipzig during the final decade of the composer's life (1740-1750). Almost all the chorale preludes are derived from earlier versions composed while Bach worked in Weimar under Duke Wilhelm Ernst, and it is the Weimar version of BWV 660 that will be performed at this recital. All three settings are based on the chorale tune *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland*, the text of which is a translation of the fourth-century Advent hymn *Veni, Redemptor Gentium*. From BWV 659's plaintive solo line to the steadfast drive of BWV 660 to BWV 661's joyful expectation of glories to come, each setting speaks to a different facet of the weary soul's desire for its Redeemer.

Girolamo Frescobaldi is among the most important organ composers of the 17th century with his work influencing the likes of Johann Sebastian Bach and Henry Purcell. Most of his musical career was based in Rome, and it was shortly after returning to his position as organist at St. Peter's Basilica in 1615 that Frescobaldi published the first editions of his *Primo Libro di Toccate*. These toccatas showcase virtuosity and musicality alike, each comprising several sections featuring diverse musical textures. *Toccata Seconda* is written in G minor, the same key as the *Nun Komm* cycle, but the historical tuning of the Italian organ at Reyes Hall renders the toccata a half-step lower than the G minor produced by modern tuning.

Dieterich Buxtehude was a Danish composer whose work became emblematic of the north German school and an inspiration for many future composers, including J. S. Bach, who famously walked 250 miles to hear Buxtehude play. Though known primarily for his *Praeludia*, Buxtehude's output also includes some of the first serious north German contributions to the genre of the ciacona. Through Buxtehude and other composers, the ciacona developed into a piece built around an ostinato bass line or harmonic progression. Though a genre built on such repetition might lend itself to tedium, Buxtehude's mastery of sectional writing elevates the ostinato from a mere repetition to a vehicle of harmonic momentum.

Sometimes recognized as the first internationally-acclaimed composer since Bach to write for the organ, Felix Mendelssohn represents the 19th-century reemergence of fine organ literature on the cultural scene. The preludes and fugues in his Opus 37 can be regarded as an homage to what had already been, and the Organ Sonatas featured in Opus 65 showcase what the romantic era had to contribute to the organ repertoire. The *Allegro, Chorale, and Fugue* was discovered relatively recently in the Berlin-Krakow Manuscripts and was only published for the first time in 1987. It begins in a blustery D minor, swirling with sixteenth notes and punctuated with chromaticism. Eventually, a lyric and full texture yields to a driving string of octaves which propels the music to the grandiose D major chord that begins the chorale, marking the end of this program's descent through the minor keys and giving a taste of the triumph and relief the faint soul feels upon encountering its Savior.

Heinrich Scheidemann was among the foremost organ composers of the early seventeenth century. A student of Sweelinck, Scheidemann's output included chorale fantasias, a genre largely indebted to Sweelinck. Scheidemann is also known for his cantus firmus arrangements of chorales and Magnificats. The tradition of Magnificat settings is tied to the Vespers service which traditionally includes the praying of the Virgin Mary's canticle, a song of praise lauding God's grace as it has operated throughout her life and history at large. *Quinti Toni* refers to the Psalm tone associated with the fifth mode of Gregorian Chant, which serves as the cantus firmus for the Magnificat

versets. In keeping with historical practice, the versets will be performed in alternatim with a schola chanting the text of the Magnificat on the Psalm tone.

Brenda Portman is a contemporary composer whose compositions have already earned several awards, including the University of Notre Dame's Liturgy Alive! Composition Competition in 2019. Her *Psalm-Sonata No. 2* was composed for the Association of Anglican Musicians' 2025 Annual Conference, and its inclusion of spirituals is meant to commemorate Juneteenth, the day of its premiere. The first movement (from which this recital derives its name) is deeply rooted in the desperate tone of Psalm 142, a plea for aid not unlike the text of *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland.* For this movement, Portman quotes "Go Down, Moses". Her second movement employs "Balm in Gilead" to explore the themes of healing found in Psalm 147. The third movement, inspired by Psalm 146, is a rousing toccata-like finale based on "Oh, Freedom" celebrating the intervention of a liberator and relief for the spirit that was once so faint.

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