



The Cathedral
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the Divine

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**ORGAN VIRTUOSO DAVID BRIGGS
PRESENTS MARCH 10 RECITAL
AT THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE**



*Part of the Cathedral's 2019-2020 season of Great Music in a Great Space
Performance features works by Brahms, Debussy, and Elgar*

New York (October XX, 2019) **The Cathedral of St. John the Divine** welcomes back **David Briggs**, organ virtuoso and Artist in Residence, to the 2019-2020 season of Great Music in a Great Space with a recital of works by Brahms, Debussy, and Elgar on **Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 7:30 pm at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Avenue (at 112th Street)**. Ticketholders are invited to a pre-concert talk by Briggs at 6:30 pm.

The New York Times describes David Briggs as “one of our finest organists, and also a particularly good transcriber of orchestral works for his own instrument.” The March 10 performance includes three works transcribed for organ, including one, Brahms’ Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Opus 68, transcribed by Briggs himself.

The program opens with a triumphal march by Sir Edward Elgar, taken from his cantata *Caractacus*. Briggs says, “Many think of Sir Edward Elgar as the ‘archetypal British composer.’ Having said this, I suspect he would not have approved of Brexit, because of his relationship with many European conductors and composers. Elgar learnt his craft by total immersion into the scores which graced the shelves of his father’s music shop: Beethoven, Schubert, Mozart, Schumann, Brahms, Wagner, Strauss. He once declaimed, ‘If you want to know where my music comes from, just look around you - it’s in the wind.’” *Caractacus* was originally orchestrated for soprano, tenor, baritone and two bass soloists, full choir and orchestra, and the power of the transcription for organ retains the swaggering triumphal mood of the final scene.

The performance continues with a transcribed version of Debussy’s classic *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune*, which, as Briggs puts it, “changed the course of music forever.” The wonderful acoustic of the Cathedral adds a considerable additional dimension to this gorgeous music.

The final piece on the program is Briggs’ own transcription of Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Opus 68, by Johannes Brahms. The work, one of Briggs’ personal favorite pieces, is the first of Brahms’ compositions he has transcribed for organ, a work of several months. Briggs says, “I have adored this work since nearly wearing out my 4LP box set of Brahms’ symphonies as a teenager. With his Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Brahms secured a place alongside Beethoven in the pantheon of great composers.”

Tickets are \$25. Complimentary tickets are available to students by showing a student ID at the Visitor Center on the night of the concert. To purchase tickets and for more information, please visit <https://www.stjohndivine.org/calendar/29429/great-organ-david-briggs>.

PROGRAM

Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934)
Triumphal March from Caractacus

Claude Achille Debussy (1862-1918)
Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune
Transcribed by Alexandre Cellier (1883-1968)

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Opus 68
Transcribed by David Briggs

About David Briggs

David Briggs is an internationally renowned organist whose performances are acclaimed

for their musicality, virtuosity, and ability to excite and engage audiences of all ages. Consistently ranked as one of the finest organists of his generation, David's extensive repertoire spans five centuries. He has also become one of the foremost organ transcribers of symphonic works, thereby giving listeners the opportunity to experience the organ in a new way. He has transcribed orchestral compositions by Schubert, Tchaikovsky, Elgar, Bruckner, Ravel, and Bach as well as Mahler's Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth symphonies.

Described as "an intrepid improviser" by Michael Barone, host of American Public Media's *Pipedreams*, David performs more than 50 concerts a year at international venues, teaches performance at Cambridge University, frequently serves on international organ competition juries, and gives master classes at colleges and conservatories across the US and Europe.

David Briggs is also a prolific composer whose works range from full scale oratorios to works for solo instruments. He has recorded two DVDs and 37 CDs, many of which include his own compositions and transcriptions. David is currently Artist in Residence at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. For more information, please visit david-briggs.org.

About Great Music in a Great Space

Revived in 2011, *Great Music in a Great Space* reprises the legendary concert series first held at the Cathedral in the 1980s. Great Music in a Great Space presents choral, orchestral, and instrumental music in the magnificent, deeply spiritual setting of the world's largest Gothic cathedral. Concerts take place in many locations: the vast space of the Crossing, the more intimate setting of the Great Choir, and the exquisite Chapels of the Tongues. The beloved holiday traditions of the Christmas Concert and New Year's Eve Concert for Peace are an integral part of our concert series.

About The Cathedral

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine is the Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of New York. It is chartered as a house of prayer for all people and a unifying center of intellectual light and leadership.

People from many faiths and communities worship together in services held more than 30 times a week; the soup kitchen serves roughly 25,000 meals annually; social service outreach has an increasingly varied roster of programs; the distinguished Cathedral School prepares young students to be future leaders; Advancing the Community of Tomorrow, the renowned preschool, afterschool and summer program, offers diverse educational and nurturing experiences; the outstanding Textile Conservation Lab preserves world treasures; concerts, exhibitions, performances and civic gatherings allow conversation, celebration, reflection and remembrance—such is the joyfully busy life of this beloved and venerated Cathedral.