



The Cathedral
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the Divine

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**ORGAN VIRTUOSO DAVID BRIGGS
RETURNS FOR OCTOBER 29 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 includes world premiere of Briggs' Variations on "Take the A Train"*

New York (October XX, 2019) **The Cathedral of St. John the Divine** is pleased to welcome back Artist in Residence **David Briggs** to the 2019-2020 season of Great Music in a Great Space with a recital of works for organ on Tuesday, October 29 at **1047 Amsterdam Avenue (at 112th Street)**.

Virtuoso organist David Briggs is known internationally as an outstanding and innovative musician, with particular attention paid to his stirring transcriptions of works by Bach, Mahler, Bruckner, Ravel, Elgar and Saint-Saens. The October 29 performance kicks off with an informative and light-hearted illustrated pre-concert talk at 6:30 pm. The program begins with one of J.S. Bach's most noble and impressive solo organ works, the *Prelude and Fugue in A minor*, BWV 543, followed by Cesar Franck's ravishing *Fantaisie in A*. Briggs then performs a short piece, *Adoration*, by Florence Price (1887-1953), the first African-American woman to achieve notable international success as a composer. This is followed by the scintillating *Deuxième Symphonie* (1929) by Marcel Dupré—a virtuosic work featuring Horowitz-like pyrotechnics and some decidedly unconventional tone colors.

The second half begins with the world premiere of Briggs' Variations on "Take the A Train" in recognition of the centenary of the Harlem Renaissance and the close relationship between Duke Ellington and St. John the Divine. Billy Strayhorn's classic jazz composition was a signature tune of the Duke Ellington Orchestra, providing another historic connection to the Cathedral and its West Harlem community. Ellington himself was a longtime friend of the Cathedral and performed one of his Sacred Concerts in its majestic space. The concert ends with Franz Liszt's monumental *Fantasia on 'B-A-C-H'*, in which the famous four-note theme is consistently metamorphosed into a truly

kaleidoscopic riot of musical color and vivacity.

Tickets are \$25. Students are admitted free to select performances with valid school ID. Visit [the Cathedral's website](#) to purchase tickets and for more information about the 2019-20 season of Great Music in a Great Space.

PROGRAM

J.S. Bach
Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543

Cesar Franck
Fantaisie in A

Florence Price
Adoration

Marcel Dupré
Deuxième Symphonie

David Briggs
Variations on "Take the A Train" (World Premiere)

Franz Liszt
Fantasia on 'B-A-C-H'

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.