



The Cathedral
Church of **Saint John**
the Divine

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THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE PRESENTS
RAYMOND NAGEM
PERFORMING J.S. BACH'S *ORGELBÜCHLEIN*

Celebrating Bach's birthday with a complete performance of Orgelbüchlein

Ticketed pre-concert lecture with cake and champagne



Photo: Damon Scheleur

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine continues its 2018–2019 season of Great Music in a Great Space with **Great Organ: Raymond Nagem**, performing the entirety of **J.S. Bach's *Orgelbüchlein***, on **Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 7:30 pm at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Avenue (at 112th Street), Manhattan.**

In celebration of Bach's 334th birthday, Associate Director of Music Raymond Nagem presents his complete *Orgelbüchlein*, or Little Organ Book. Bach inscribed this collection of chorale preludes with a rustic couplet in German: roughly, "In praise of God's almighty will / And for

my neighbor's greater skill," and each of these 46 preludes embody this dual purpose. Eminently practical for use in church, and indispensable to organ students for technical development, each prelude is at the same time a tiny jewel of musical sophistication, comparable to the engravings of Dürer or the sonnets of Shakespeare. With tremendous skill and psychological insight, Bach paints a picture in notes based on the text and music of each chorale, ranging from the fluttering of angels' wings at Bethlehem, to the drooping of Christ's body on the Cross, to the pealing church bells of New Year's Day.

Dr. Nagem has created a blog in which he will highlight one *Orgelbüchlein* prelude per day leading up to the March 21 concert, culminating in a ticketed pre-recital lecture, where concertgoers can celebrate Bach's birthday with cake and champagne. The lecture begins at 6:30 pm. The blog, updated daily, can be found here: <https://bachorgelbuchlein.wordpress.com/>

The Great Organ, built in 1911 by Ernest M. Skinner, rebuilt and expanded in 1954 by Æolian-Skinner, and fully restored in 2008, is the musical voice of the Cathedral: one of the landmark instruments in the United States, and an acclaimed national treasure. The Great Organ Series is part of Great Music in a Great Space, which brings world-class musicians each season to perform at St. John the Divine.

Tickets are \$25. To purchase tickets and for more information, please visit: <http://www.stjohndivine.org/calendar/13344/great-organ-raymond-nagem-6>

Program

Johann Sebastian Bach

Tocatta & Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565

Orgelbüchlein, BWV 599-644

About Raymond Nagem

Raymond Nagem is Associate Director of Music and Organist at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, and a member of the organ faculty at Manhattan School of Music, where he teaches organ literature, service playing, and improvisation. He completed his D.M.A. at The Juilliard School in May 2016, where he was a student of Paul Jacobs.

A native of Medford, Mass., Dr. Nagem attended the Boston Archdiocesan Choir School and began organ lessons there with John Dunn. He earned his B. A. from Yale University in 2009, as a double major in Music and Psychology, and studied the organ with Thomas Murray, and his M. A. in 2011 from Juilliard. He has worked since 2010 at St. John the Divine, where he has primary responsibility for service playing and choral accompaniment and frequently conducts the cathedral's several choral ensembles. In addition to these duties, he performs in recital both in New York and across the country.

Highlights for the 2018–19 season include an October recital featuring Karg-Elert's magnificent and rarely played Organ Symphony, a performance of J. S. Bach's complete *Orgelbüchlein* at St.

John the Divine, as well as recitals at St. Thomas Fifth Avenue, Trinity College, Hartford, and the Geneva Music Festival. Dr. Nagem's album *Divine Splendor* is available on the Pro Organo label.

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; Adults and Children in Trust, 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.

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