

St James Cathedral  
Toronto

MUSIC AT MIDDAY  
Spring and Summer 2017  
TWELVE ORGAN CONCERTS  
by  
DAVID BRIGGS  
Artist in Residence



ADMISSION FREE  
Retiring Collection

Concerts start at 1pm on Tuesdays  
and last between 45 and 55 minutes

All are very welcome

17th January

## THE SPLENDOUR OF THE BAROQUE

Organ Music by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)



Tocatta and Fugue in F major, BWV 540

Trio Sonata No 1 in E flat, BWV 525

Three Chorale Preludes from the *Orgelbüchlein*:

In dir ist Freude, BWV 615

Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ, BWV 639

Herr Gott, nun schleuß den Himmel auf, BWV 617

Tocatta, Adagio and Fugue in C, BWV 564

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24th January

Canadian Pride

Toccata and Fugue in C, *Andrew Ager (1962-)*

*from Douze Courtes Pièces pour Orgue, Opus 64, Rachel Laurin (1961-)*

Procession with Variations  
Asian Legend  
Impromptu  
Toccatarina

Introduction, Passacaglia  
and Fugue, *Healey Willan (1880-1968)*



*Healey Willan*

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21st February

Russian Roulette

Overture: Ruslan and Ludmilla, *Mikhail Glinka (1804-57)*

*transcribed by David Briggs*

Pictures at an Exhibition, *Modest Mussorgsky (1839 1881)*

*transcribed by Keith John*

Originally cast as a virtuoso piano piece, and later famously orchestrated by Maurice Ravel, today's performance is played in an arrangement by concert organist Keith John. This is his synopsis of the work:

In 'Pictures at an Exhibition' Mussorgsky chose to illustrate musically from the Hartmann Exhibition of paintings, architectural plans, set designs and other craftwork. The opening Promenade recurs at various times and in different guises as the composer moves around the exhibition.

- Promenade
- Gnomus  
A drawing portraying a small gnome with deformed legs whose awkward movements are accompanied by piercing shrieks. The drawing was a design for a wooden nutcracker to hang on a Christmas tree.
- Promenade
- Il vecchio castello  
A watercolour from Hartmann's time in Italy portraying a troubadour singing in front of a medieval castle.
- Promenade
- Tuileries (Dispute d'enfants après jeux)  
Another watercolour this time from France depicting a lively scene of children and their nannies in the famous Parisian gardens.
- Bydlo  
A lumbering Polish cart on enormous wheels being drawn by oxen.
- Promenade
- Ballet of the unhatched chicks  
A picture for one of the scenes in a ballet called 'Trilbi': the sets, hats and costumes were designed by Hartmann, the choreography was by Petipa and the music by Julius Gerber. It was staged in St Petersburg in 1871
- Two Polish Jews, rich and poor

Two pencil drawings owned by Mussorgsky himself shows the contrast between a rich, confident man and a wheedling, fast talking beggar. A later title was 'Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle'.

- Promenade
- Limoges - le Marche  
French women gossiping and arguing in this lively scene of a busy market town.
- Catacombae  
Hartmann depicting himself exploring the subterranean passages of Paris by the light of a lantern. The later subtitle 'Sepulcrum Romanum' to this particular picture must be considered a lapse on Mussorgsky's part.
- Promenade, con mortuis in lingua mortua - Literally 'with the dead in a dead language'. Almost regarded as a continuation of the previous picture, Mussorgsky supplied this note: 'The creative spirit of the dead Hartmann leads me to the skulls and invokes them: the skulls glow faintly from within'.
- Baba Yaga - the hut on fowl's legs. A drawing showing a clock shaped in the form of the most famous Russian witch, Baba Yaga. Mussorgsky adds to the picture by portraying the witch in flight in her mortar.
- The Great Gate of Kiev



Hartmann regarded his plans for a gate in the city of Kiev as his masterpiece. Sadly this impressive project was never realised. It was conceived in the grand old Russian style with a cupola shaped like a Slavonic helmet. Mussorgsky again adds to the picture by composing a relatively large scale finale including a Russian Orthodox chant and the triumphant pealing of bells.

Modest Mussorgsky



## 28th February

### 'A touch of garlic'

#### French masterpieces from the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

March on a theme of Handel, *Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)*

Stèle pour un enfant défunte, *Louis Vierne (1870-1937)*

Scherzo (Symphonie No 2), *Louis Vierne*

Prélude et Fugue sur le nom d'Alain, *Maurice Duruflé (1902-86)*

'Allegro Deciso' from 'Evocation', *Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)*

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## 14th March

Symphonie No 2 in E minor Op 20 (1902), *Louis Vierne (1870-1937)*

Allegro (Allegro risoluto ma non troppo vivo)

Choral (Largo)

Scherzo (Quasi presto)

Cantabile (Larghetto)

Final (Maestoso)

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Notre-Dame de Paris - rather a rare view!

## 21st March

**‘Death and Transfiguration’ - music by Richard Strauss  
(1864-1949)  
with Laura McAlpine, Mezzo-Soprano**

Four Last Songs  
Symphonic Tone Poem Tod und Verklärung  
transcribed by David Briggs

Most of us enjoy 'epiphany moments' in our musical lives. Hearing the ending of Strauss' symphonic tone poem 'Death and Transfiguration' was, for me, one such moment, as a thirteen-year old, on a family outing just opposite the RSC in Stratford-upon-Avon. These moments of grace, after the 'idealist's' ascension to heaven, comprise some of the most ravishingly beautiful music that Strauss ever wrote.

Sadly, Richard Strauss never wrote any organ music, but I hope that you will agree that 'Tod und Verklärung' transfers very effectively to the instrument, especially one with so much colourful resource as the organ here at St James.

Composition started in the late summer of 1888 and was completed November 18, 1889 and was dedicated to the composer's friend Friedrich Rosch.

Unusual for a composer of 25 years of age, the music depicts the death of an artist. As the man lies dying, thoughts of his life pass through his head: his childhood innocence, the struggles of his manhood, the attainment of his worldly goals; and at the end, he receives the longed-for transfiguration "from the infinite reaches of heaven".

There are four parts:

- Largo (The sick man, near death)
- Allegro molto agitato (The battle between life and death offers no respite to the man)
- Meno mosso (The dying man's life passes before him)
- Moderato (The sought-after transfiguration)

English music critic Ernest Newman described this as music to which one would not want to die to or awaken. "It is too spectacular, too brilliantly lit, too full of pageantry of a crowd; whereas this is a journey one must make very quietly, and alone."

Strauss conducted the premiere on June 21, 1890 at the Eisenach Festival He also conducted this work for his first appearance in England. This was at the Wagner Concert with the Philharmonic Society on June 15, 1897 at the Queen's Hall in London.

In one of Strauss' last compositions, "Im Abendrot" from the so-called "Four Last Songs," Strauss poignantly quotes the 'transfiguration' theme from his tone poem of 60 years earlier, during and after the soprano's final line, "Ist dies etwa der Tod?" (Could this then be death?).

Upon Strauss' own death, he remarked that his music was absolutely correct; his feelings mirrored those of the artist depicted within. Strauss said to his daughter-in-



law as he lay on his deathbed in 1949: "It's a funny thing Alice, dying is just the way I composed it in Tod und Verklärung."

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## 28th March



Sonata in G major, Sir Edward ELGAR (1857-1934)

Allegro maestoso  
Allegretto  
Andante espressivo  
Presto (comodo)

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## 11th April

Music for Holy Week  
with Christina Stelmacovich (Mezzo-Soprano)  
including music by J S Bach

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## Wednesday 19th April at 7.30pm

Symphony No 2, 'Resurrection', *Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)*  
transcribed by *David Briggs (2012)*

Julia Morson (Soprano)

Christina Stelmacovich  
(Mezzo Soprano)

St James Cathedral Choir and friends

Conducted by Robert Busiakiewicz

Tickets available (\$20 upwards) from the cathedral website.

In association with the Bailey-Berriman Trust, The Bank of Montreal and the Canadian International Organ Competition.

There is likely to be very high demand for this concert - please order early to avoid disappointment. Tickets available very soon at [www.stjamescathedral.on.ca](http://www.stjamescathedral.on.ca) (Tel:416-364-7865)

Signed copies David Briggs' new double CD of Mahler 2 will be available at this concert.



GUSTAV MAHLER: SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN C MINOR,  
**'RESURRECTION'**



PREMIERE RECORDING  
IN THE NEW ORGAN/CHORAL VERSION BY ORGANIST

**DAVID BRIGGS**

Chestnut Music CD 012



**13th June at 1pm**

Symphony No 4, *Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)*  
transcribed by *David Briggs (2016)*

with Julia Morson, Soprano

**NORTH-AMERICAN PREMIERE**



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**15th August**

**The Art of Transcription**

Orchestral Suite No 3 in D major, BWV 1068, *J S Bach*  
(arr. David Briggs)

Overture (Grave - Vivace)

Air

Gavotte

Bourrée

Gigue



Prelude à l'après-midi d'un Faune,  
*Claude Debussy*  
(arr. *Alexandre Cellier*)

Toccata, *Serge Prokofiev* (arr.  
*Meyer*)

La Valse, *Maurice Ravel* (arr  
*Fagiani*)

*Claude Debussy*

**22nd August**

**You choose!**

A programme of **requests** from the audience

David Briggs has a repertoire over over 500 pieces, spreading over five centuries. Place your request now! Or perhaps a favourite theme for improvisation....

Requests are warmly welcomed - please submit by 1st August - earlier if possible!





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