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The **Celebration Works** concert series is dedicated to supporting
local artists and offering thoughtful and inspiring
musical programs for our community.

Please stay after the concert to greet the performers and enjoy refreshments!

Thanks to **Linda Lewis** and **Cindy Finch** for organizing the reception,
to **Andrea Spella** (spellacaffe.com) for donating delicious coffee,
to **Chris Nilson** and **Marilyn Howe** for running the sound and livestream,
and to **Bill Resley**, **Bill Edwards**, and everyone providing hospitality and production support.

If you would like to receive our season brochure and reminders before each concert,
please send your mailing address to music@firstpresportland.org



Sunday, May 21, 2023 | 2 pm

Strings and Pipes

First Presbyterian Church | 1200 SW Alder St, Portland, OR 97205 | www.firstpresportland.org

Program

Please silence electronic devices.

Theme with Variations, Op. 150, Nr. 1 Joseph Rheinberger
(1839–1901)

Pièce d'Orgue (Fantasia in G), BWV 572Johann Sebastian Bach
Trés vitelement - Gravement - Lentement (1685–1750)

SerenadeChris DeBlasio
(1959–1993)

Rumanian Folk Dances (1915)Béla Bartók
(1881–1945)
1. Dance with Sticks
2. Waistband Dance
3. Stamping Dance
4. Hornpipe Dance
5. Rumanian Polka
6. Quick Dance

What a Friend We Have in Jesus! William Bolcom
(b. 1938)

Vocalise, Op. 34, Nr. 14Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873–1943)

CapriccioNaji Hakim
(b. 1955)

Brenda Brenner, violin | *Chris Young*, organ

Logo

About the Artists

Brenda Brenner is Professor of Music in music education, co-chair of the Department of Orchestral Conducting, and director of the Jacobs Academy at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. She specializes in string music education, teaching applied violin and courses in violin and string pedagogy.



Brenner earned BM and BME degrees from Wichita State University and MM and DMA degrees in violin performance from the Eastman School of Music. In addition to her appointment to the Jacobs Music Education Department, she serves as co-director of the IU String Academy, a position she has held since 1993. Her String Academy students have been featured in concerts in major venues throughout the United States and have presented tours throughout Europe, Asia, and South America.

As director of the Fairview Project — a program in which every first and second grader in an underserved school is taught violin as part of the curriculum — Brenner is researching the cognitive, academic, and social outcomes of early instrumental music instruction.

An active performer of chamber music throughout the United States, she partners with pianist Kenneth Huber and her husband, organist Christopher Young. She also teaches and conducts at the IU Summer String Academy and is assistant director of the IU Retreat for Professional Violinists and Violists.

Additionally, she is an active international clinician, with recent appearances at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic, American String Teachers Association National Conferences, and Music Educators Conferences throughout the United States. She is president of the American String Teachers Association.



Christopher Young is Professor of Organ at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, Bloomington IN, where he teaches undergraduate and graduate organ majors and the four-semester graduate organ literature cycle. Dr. Young has performed recitals on three continents and has been heard on Minnesota Public Radio's nationally syndicated "Pipedreams." He was a featured soloist at the 2000 American Guild of Organists National Convention and several AGO regional conventions. Recital and teaching engagements have taken him to Sweden, where he performed on the famous Leufstabruk organ, and to Korea. Young has also appeared in concert with the Rochester (MN) Chamber Chorale, the Minneapolis Chamber Symphony and with his wife, violinist Brenda Brenner. His compact disc, "To Thee All Angels Cry Aloud," was released on the Pro Organo label.

A native of New England, Young is the winner of the 1988 National Young Artists Competition (NYACOP) of the American Guild of Organists and the 1988 Arthur Poister Competition (Syracuse University). He was also recognized by Musical America as one of their outstanding Young Artists of 1989. His concert career began under the auspices of a special young artist program provided by Karen McFarlane Artists, and continued under the Young Organists Cooperative, of which he was a co-director until 1993.

In addition to concertizing, Young presents master classes, workshops, and lectures. He has given classes and performances at several church music clinics, including the Montreat Conference on Music and Worship, the St. Olaf Conference on Music and Theology, and the national convention of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians. He has presented at several AGO National Pedagogy Conferences, as well as national and regional conventions of the AGO. Several presentations have focused on electronic media, including a virtual tour of North German Organs, interactive analyses of organ music, and the theoretical underpinnings of the organ music of Olivier Messiaen. He has served as organist of First Presbyterian Church, Bloomington since 2008.

Dr. Young began organ lessons under the tutelage of Marion Anderson while a freshman at Bates College in Lewiston, ME, where, in 1982 he graduated Phi Beta Kappa with High Honors in Music. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music, he earned the MM and DMA degrees and the prestigious Performer's Certificate under David Craighead and Russell Saunders.

Program Notes

Best known to organists for his twenty sonatas, **Josef Rheinberger** also composed several suites for violin and organ (Opp. 150, 166). *The Theme with Variations* is the first work from the six-movement Suite, Op. 150, composed in the late 1880s. The harmonic design of the theme is suggestive of a Baroque ground bass (e.g. a passacaglia or chaconne), but the harmony, four-bar periodic phrase structure, and dramatic arch-like structure belie foundations in the Classical/Romantic traditions. A brief cadenza for the violin interrupts the work prior to the fifth, Major variation. The work ends quietly following a short coda.

Most of **Johann Sebastian Bach**'s numerous large form Preludes and Fugues are regularly heard at concerts and liturgical services around the globe. The Pièce d'Orgue, perhaps better known to some as the G Major Fantasia, is an early, yet quite unique and powerful composition. The piece is in three easily discernible and distinct sections differentiated by character and French tempo indications, with the outer segments serving more as introduction and coda to the remarkable central movement. As the title suggests, French influences are readily apparent, not the least of which is the *plein jeu* style of the middle section.

Known particularly for his song cycles and musicals, New York composer **Chris DeBlasio** also contributed chamber music for organ and solo instrument, including works with soprano saxophone, guitar, and violin. Dominated by soaring and hummable melodic ideas, the *Serenade* is cast in a traditional sonata form, and unabashedly maintains a twentieth-century tonal language. Unfortunately, DeBlasio died from AIDS-related illness at the young age of 34, not unlike his older New York colleague Calvin Hampton, an organist who composed a large body of organ music whose life was shortened under similar circumstances. Upon hearing of DeBlasio's untimely death, his one-time composition teacher John Corigliano reportedly proclaimed him as 'a young composer who embodied that rarest of all things—a truly original lyric voice'.

Béla Bartók sadly left us nothing in the way of organ music, despite a vibrant rhythmic and colorful compositional style that seems ideally suited to the instrument. The *Rumanian Folk Dances* were the immediate results of Bartók's seminal studies of Hungarian folk music from 1910–14 (the seven folk melodies in this collection of six dances were collected in Transylvania, an area once under Hungarian rule). These popular pieces were originally scored for piano solo, but have gained many new lives in the composer's own transcriptions for violin and piano, and orchestra.

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What a Friend We Have in Jesus! is one of many pieces composed by **William Bolcom** under the heading of Gospel Preludes for Organ. Bolcom's knowledge and adoption of many American styles is readily apparent here, where the Hammond organ technique of gospel church musicians is invoked. Following a brief introduction, the melody appears twice in the top voice with various accompaniments, frequent dynamic changes, surprise rests, and distinctively colorful harmony throughout. This frolicking interpretation of the well-known hymn tune is sure to get one's foot tapping to the beat!

The last of a set of fourteen songs, **Sergei Rachmaninoff's** *Vocalise* has gained particular prominence in the various transcriptions subsequently arranged by the composer. The original, for voice and piano, dates from 1912. Revisions and versions for instruments include a version for soprano and orchestra and one in which the first violin section takes the role of the voice, transposed from C# minor to E minor. The depth of expression, sweeping lyricism, and richly chromatic but tonal harmony imbue the piece with a hauntingly poetic character.

Naji Hakim has fast become one of the most well-known and revered composers for organ of our time. Born in Lebanon but musically trained in France, Hakim succeeded Olivier Messiaen at La Trinité in Paris, although he was mostly a student of Jean Langlais. His works are generally sectional in nature, filled with lively ostinati (repeated melodic and rhythmic patterns), jaunty rhythms, and a healthy sense of humor. *Capriccio* has them all: a syncopated main theme in the violin accompanied by a variety of repeated patterns and figurations, contrasting themes in mixed meters, colorful harmony revealing Hakim's love for the music of Gershwin, and a kaleidoscope of musical ideas that give the piece its "capricious" title.



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