



Amanda Mole Organ

Friday, February 21, 2025
Christ United Methodist Church
Greensboro, NC

Prelude and Fugue in D Major, BWV 532

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)



German born Johann Sebastian Bach is often considered to be one of the greatest musical geniuses of all time. Bach came from a family of musicians, which fostered his prodigious talent from an early age, and passed his love for music on to his 20 children, several of whom became notable musicians themselves. He was an extraordinary keyboard virtuoso, excelling at both the organ and harpsichord. Throughout his career, Bach held various positions as a court musician, composing and performing for royalty, and as a church organist.



Despite his serious reputation, Bach had quite an adventurous side, having once walked over 200 miles to hear a performance by organist Dieterich Buxtehude! Bach's life was filled with music, but it was also peppered with moments that reveal his personal passions and quirks, adding a touch of humanity to his legendary status.

The *Prelude and Fugue* was written sometime between 1708 and 1717, though the exact date is unsure. The Prelude begins with rapid scales that showcase the performer's virtuosity. The Fugue continues that same exciting and joyful feel into the second section. This work is a perfect example of J.S. Bach's genius.

Ciacona in F Minor

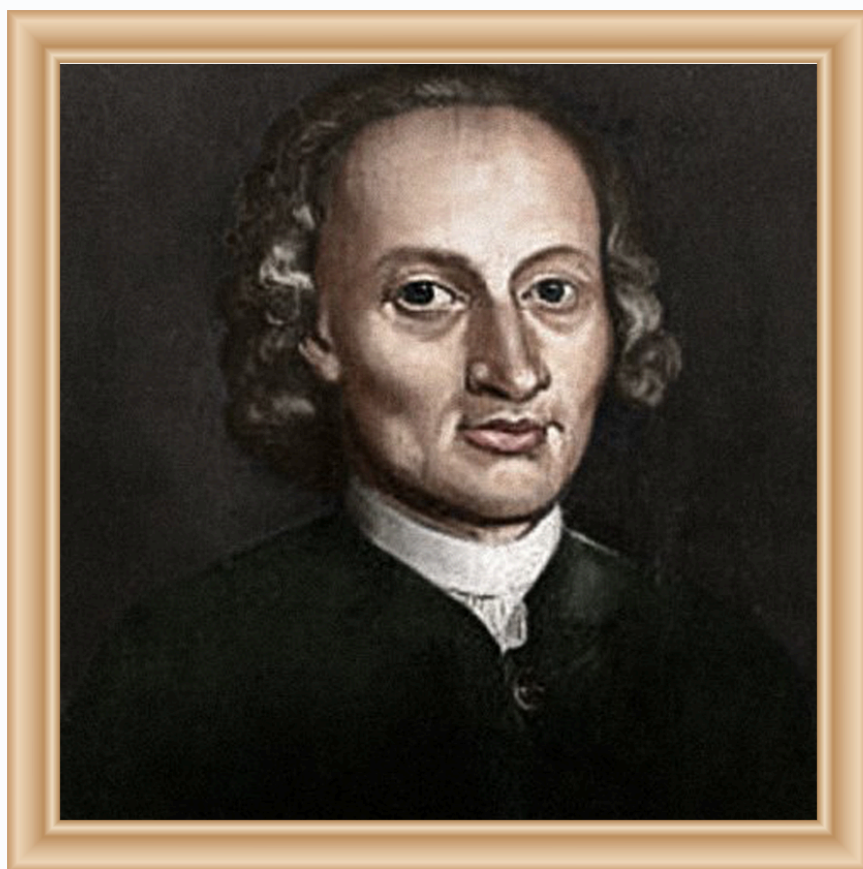
Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)



Johann Pachelbel, a German composer from the Baroque period, is best known for his *Canon in D Major* (you've probably heard it played at many weddings)! Pachelbel wrote for a number of different genres, including chorales, fugues, and chamber music. His contributions to organ music in particular cannot be understated.

In addition to composing, Pachelbel was a respected teacher, with students like Johann Christoph Bach, the older brother of famed Johann Sebastian Bach, featured on this program. Pachelbel held positions as an organist in Nuremberg and Erfurt before passing away in 1706, leaving a lasting legacy in the music world.

Pachelbel's *Ciacona in F Minor* is a chaconne, meaning that it features a repeating bass line (called an ostinato) with a series of variations. The *Ciacona* consists of a theme and 22 variations, with the final variation being almost identical to the theme. This piece showcases Pachelbel's skill in variation technique, exploring and altering the harmonic progressions as well as the theme itself.



6 Stücke in kanonischer Form, Op. 56

2. Mit innigem Ausdruck

5. Nicht zu schnell

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Robert Schumann was a German composer, pianist, and influential music critic of the Romantic era, born in 1810 in Zwickau. He is best known for his piano music, lieder (songs), and orchestral works.

Schumann's compositions are characterized by their emotional depth, lyrical melodies, and innovative harmonic language.



In addition to his work as a composer, Schumann was a music critic, founding the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik" (New Journal for Music) in 1834. Schumann was also married to renowned pianist Clara Wieck, with whom he had eight children. Unfortunately, Schumann struggled with mental health issues throughout his life and spent his final years in a mental institution, passing away in 1856.

Schumann's *Six Studies in Canonic Form, Op. 56* is a set of six pieces composed in 1845 for organ. Each piece utilizes different canonic techniques, with a different style of canon (musical imitation) for each. The second movement, "Mit innigem Ausdruck" ("With Heartfelt Expression") is slower, with a beautiful melody weaved throughout the music. The fifth movement, "Nicht zu schnell" ("Not Too Fast") is also a slower tempo, but feels quicker due to the interplay between the various musical lines. Both of these movements are fantastic, and a true testament to Schumann's compositional prowess.

Prelude and Tarantelle

Brenda Portman (b. 1980)

American composer and organist Brenda Portman is a secular (non-religious) and sacred (religious) composer. Born in 1980, she has established a well-respected career as a concert organist and composer, having received a number of awards from organ competitions. Portman is currently the Resident Organist at Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, and is also the Executive Director of the church's renowned Organ Concert Series. She also teaches organ and piano at Xavier University.



Prelude and Tarantelle is a dynamic and engaging organ composition published in her collection titled "Horizons". The prelude section sets a contemplative and lyrical tone, while the tarantelle section introduces a lively and rhythmic dance-like character, reflecting the traditional Italian tarantella dance. The tarantella is a fast paced dance that originated from the belief that someone bitten by a tarantula could 'sweat out' the venom through dance!

Five Dances for Organ

1. The Primitives

Calvin Hampton (1938 - 1984)



Calvin Hampton was an American organist and sacred music composer. Born in Pennsylvania and raised in Ohio, he graduated from Oberlin Conservatory in 1960 and Syracuse University in 1963. He served as the organist and choirmaster at Calvary Episcopal Church in Manhattan from 1963 to 1983. Despite his early death from AIDS at the age of 45, Hampton remained active in his work until the very end, composing the "Alexander Variations" for two pipe organs while bedridden.

Hampton's "The Primitives" is the first movement from his Five Dances for Organ. Composed in 1981, this piece is inspired by Igor Stravinsky's "Five Easy Pieces for Piano Duet". "The Primitives" is energetic and rhythmic, making it a standout piece in this MGS recital!



Gloria 5: Tierce en taille

Nicolas de Grigny (1672-1703)



Born in Reims, France, in 1672, Nicolas de Grigny was a Baroque composer and organist. He is best known for his *Premier Livre d'Orgue* (*First Book of Organ Music*), published in 1699. This collection includes a mass and settings of five hymns for the principal feasts of the church year. This program features one of the movements, "Gloria 5: Tierce en taille." His work had a significant influence on later composers, including Johann Sebastian Bach, who transcribed his entire collection for his own use. Unfortunately, De Grigny's life was tragically short, as he died at the age of 31 in 1703.

"Gloria 5: Tierce en taille" is notable for the intricate interweaving of various musical lines. The title "Tierce en taille" refers to the use of the third manual (tierce) and the tenor voice (taille) in the composition. This movement is a fugue, the primary melody (the subject) consistently playing against other lines of music (usually called the answer).



The Revd Mustard his Installation Prelude

Nico Muhly (b. 1981)



Vermont native Nico Muhly is an American composer, born in 1981. He is known for his work in contemporary classical music, as well as collaborations with pop and indie artists like Björk. Muhly has composed for notable symphony orchestras, chamber ensembles, and has had two operas commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera: *Two Boys* (2011) and *Marnie* (2018).

The Revd Mustard his Installation Prelude was written for the installation service of Reverend James Mustard as rector of The Church of St Mary the Virgin in East Barnet. Muhly uses consistent motion between the performer's hands, as well as a slowly developing melodic pattern that begins in the foot pedals, before moving to the hand. This creates an energetic piece that you are absolutely sure to love!

Fantasia in F Minor, K 608

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

tr. Martin Haselböck



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in 1756 in Salzburg, Austria. Mozart began composing at the wized age of five, and performed before European royalty by the age of six. Throughout his life, Mozart traveled extensively, performing and seeking better opportunities. He spent much of his career in Vienna, where he achieved fame but struggled with financial stability. Despite his short life—he died at the age of 35—he composed over 800 works, including symphonies, operas, chamber music, piano concertos, and choral music.

His *Fantasia in F Minor* was originally composed for a mechanical organ, also known as a clock organ, in 1791. This dramatic piece showcases Mozart's remarkable skill in counterpoint and melodic development. The *Fantasia* is structured in a sort of three-part form, with an intense and energetic opening section, a lyrical middle section, and a return of the opening material. The organist displays their virtuosic performance ability, as well as their ability to be expressive and sensitive. This piece is a fantastic closer to this MGS concert!



Matt Wilson, Program Notes

Matt Wilson, the author of the program notes that you hopefully found illuminating and inspiring, is a violinist and violist from South Carolina. He received a Bachelor's in Music Education from Appalachian State University in Boone, NC, before teaching in the public schools for several years. He received a Master's in Music Education from UNC Greensboro and is a Doctoral Candidate in Music Education at the University of Kansas (KU) in Lawrence, KS. Rock Chalk! He is an active researcher and presenter at the state and national levels, focusing on issues of gender and sexuality in music education.

Matt has served in several leadership roles in the NC Music Educators Association - Orchestra Section. He is a member of the National Association for Music Education and the American String Teachers Association (ASTA). He is currently the Chair of ASTA's National Student Advisory Committee.

