

MUSIC AT ST. PHILIP  SUMMER SEASON

PRESENTS

◆ 2019 SUMMER KEYBOARD CONCERTS ◆

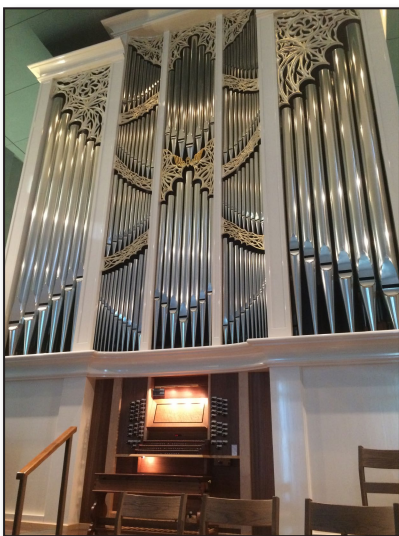
PROGRAM No. 3

*in partnership with*



# Aaron Tan

## Organ Fireworks



**SUNDAY | SEPTEMBER 15, 2019 | 2:00 p.m.**

St. Philip Presbyterian Church ◆ 4807 San Felipe Street ◆ Houston, Texas

## About the Artist

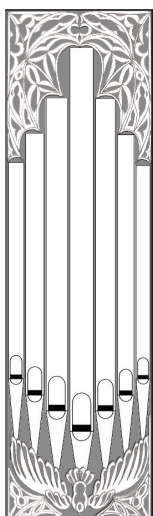


First Prize and Audience Prize winner of the 2018 American Guild of Organists (AGO) National Young Artist Competition in Organ Performance (NYACOP), **Aaron Tan** is a Canadian concert organist and pianist who enjoys multi-faceted careers both as a musician and a materials scientist.

Aaron's primary musical tutelage has been with John Tuttle, David Palmer, and Joel Hastings. His musical upbringing started on the piano and later on the violin. He received his Associate (ARCT) diploma in Piano Performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, Canada at the age of twelve and went on to earn his Licentiate (LTCL) and Fellowship (FTCL) diplomas in Piano Performance from Trinity College of Music, London, England, at 13 and 15 years of age, respectively. When he was 18, he also completed his ARCT diploma in Violin Performance.

In 2004, under the auspices of the Barwell Scholarship (awarded to pianists interested in learning the organ), he began organ studies with John Tuttle while concurrently entering as a freshman in Engineering Science at the University of Toronto. Since then, he has gone on to complete both Associate (ARCCO) and Fellowship (FRCCO) diplomas in organ from the Royal Canadian College of Organists (RCCO). In addition, he has also won numerous noteworthy contests and scholarships including the Toronto RCCO Young Organists Competition, the Osborne Organ Competition of the Summer Institute of Church Music (Ontario), the RCCO's National Organ Playing Competition, the Charlotte Hoyt Bagnall Scholarship for Church Musicians, the Lilian Forsyth Scholarship, the 2012 Poland International Piano Festival Competition, the West Chester University Organ Competition, the Arthur Poister Scholarship Competition, the Sursa American Organ Competition, and most recently, the 2018 American Guild of Organists National Young Artist Competition in Organ Performance where he was awarded both First Prize and Audience Prize. Aaron regularly performs on both the piano and organ.

Aaron has served as Organ Scholar at St. John's Episcopal Church in Detroit, Michigan, Artist in Residence at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Detroit, and Assistant Organist at Christ Church Cranbrook, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Currently Aaron is studying at the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University and serving as Organ Scholar at Church of the Resurrection, New York City.



Aaron also holds a Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering from the University of Michigan, and worked there as a postdoctoral researcher in the University's Laboratory for Complex Materials and Thin Films Research, studying the dielectric and thermal properties of polymer thin films. ■

More information about Aaron's musical interests and activities can be found at [www.aarontan.org](http://www.aarontan.org)

## About the Organ



Designed and built by Paul Fritts and Company of Tacoma, Washington, the organ was installed in the newly renovated St. Philip sanctuary in early 2010. The case appearance, in keeping with the spare nature of the church architecture, is an original design and incorporates ideas found in several revered historic organ cases. The treble flats curve inward and alternate direction in ancient Dutch fashion, and the proportions of the bass and tenor flats follow well-established trends. The carvings are contemporary creations inspired by Renaissance-era Italian organ pipe shades. Tonally the organ is more strict and at its core Northern-Germanic, strongly influenced by the work of organ builder Arp Schnitger (1648–1719). There is an abundance of reed stops, and the scope of the instrument is further broadened by the presence of a Swell with shades on three sides, along with string stops and an Hautbois (a strict French Cavaillé-Coll copy). There is also a wide variety of flute stops throughout the organ. The Fritts

organ is routinely used for countless hours of practice and study each week, and serves not only St. Philip Church in worship and concert, but also the University of Houston and Rice University as a teaching instrument.

### Op. 29 Specifications

#### **GREAT** (manual I)

Principal	16'
Octave	8'
Rohrflöte	8'
Salicional	8'
Octave	4'
Spitzflöte	4'
Quint	2 2/3'
Octave	2'
Terz	1 3/5'
Mixture	IV–VII
Cornet ( <i>from c'</i> )	V
Trompet	16'
Trompet	8'
Trompet	4'
Baarpfeife	8'

#### **POSITIV** (manual II)

Principal	8'
Gedackt	8'
Quintadena	8'
Octave	4'
Rohrflöte	4'
Octave	2'
Larigot	1 1/3'
Sesquialtera	II
Sharff	IV–VI
Dulcian	8'

#### **SWELL** (manual III)

Principal	8'
Bourdon	8'
Viol di Gamba	8'
Voix Celeste ( <i>from c</i> )	8'
Octave	4'
Koppelflöte	4'
Nasat	2 2/3'
Blockflöte	2'
Tierce	1 3/5'
Mixture	IV–V
Fagott	16'
Trompet	8'
Hautbois	8'

#### **PEDAL**

Principal	16'
Subbaß	16'
Octave	8'
Bourdon	8'
Octave	4'
Mixture	VI–VIII
Posaune	32'
Posaune	16'
Trompet	8'
Trompet	4'

*Mechanical key action*  
*Mechanical stop action*  
 + *electric preset system*  
*Tremulant (whole organ)*  
*Wind stabilizer*  
*Kellner temperament*

Paul Fritts and Company have built nearly 50 highly regarded organs throughout the United States. Among these are instruments for the University of Puget Sound, University of Washington (three organs), Arizona State University, Stanford University, Pacific Lutheran University, Princeton Theological Seminary, Vassar College, University of Notre Dame (three organs), Eastman School of Music, Episcopal Church of the Ascension (Seattle, WA), St. Joseph Cathedral (Columbus, OH), Sacred Heart Cathedral (Rochester, NY), First Presbyterian Church (Bloomington, IN), and two organs currently under construction for the new chapel at Hillsdale College in southern Michigan. ■



# Program

## Organ Fireworks

### Præludium in G major

Nicolaus Bruhns

1665–1697

Nicolaus Bruhns was a pupil of Dieterich Buxtehude, one of the most important composers of the German mid-Baroque before Bach. Bruhns carried on the composition model used by Buxtehude for the Præludium, as an improvisatory, freeform work with multiple contrasting sections. The **Præludium in G** is in five sections and includes two contrapuntal passages, the first of which is in a rich five-voice texture and features writing for double pedal. The writing is imaginative, exuberant, and full of variety.

- Duration: 8 minutes

### Toccata sesta (from *Il secondo libro di toccate...*)

Girolamo Frescobaldi

1583–1643

Frescobaldi was the first of the great composers of the ancient Franco-Netherlandish-Italian tradition who chose to focus his creative energy on instrumental composition. He was a trendsetter in realizing the potential emotional scope that keyboard music could have. Frescobaldi's two books of toccatas and partitas (1615 and 1627) are among his most important collections. Both books open with a set of twelve toccatas written in a flamboyant improvisatory style and alternating fast-note runs (*passaggi*) with more intimate and meditative parts (*affetti*), plus short bursts of contrapuntal imitation.

- Duration: 5 minutes

### Sonata No. 2 in c minor ♦ BWV 526

Johann Sebastian Bach

1685–1750

I. *Vivace*

II. *Largo*

III. *Allegro*

Around 1727–1730, Bach introduced a new organ genre: the trio sonata. This type of sonata — with two melodic instruments and bass, or a soloist and keyboard — had long been a fixture in Baroque chamber music, but the three parts had never been heard before on one instrument. Bach's collection of six trio sonatas for organ is regarded as one of his masterpieces, as well as being among his most difficult compositions for the instrument. They were intended for his eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann Bach to perfect the latter's organ technique. With the exception of the sixth sonata, many of the movements are derived and reworked from earlier works of Bach's.

- Duration: 12 minutes

### Partita „Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme“ ♦ Op. 8, No. 2

Hugo Distler

1908–1942

I. *Toccata*

II. *Bicinium*

III. *Fugue*

Distler's importance in shaping the direction of German organ music in the twentieth century is sometimes underestimated, possibly due to his tragically short life. His fondness for sacred music and the neo-Baroque style was exemplified not only in the Lutheran chorales upon which he often based his works, but also the timbres he stipulated and the musical forms he used. His three-movement partita on the Advent chorale *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* (Wake, awake, a voice is calling) was written in 1934 and premiered by Distler himself on the famous rear organ at St. Jakobi in Lübeck. The Toccata begins with a dazzling rocket figuration which accompanies the chorale melody, first presented by the pedal in long notes. Each phrase of the chorale is treated to a different texture of writing, including canons and echoes. The toccata ends on full organ with a richly ornamented treatment of the final phrase of the chorale. The quaint Bicinium that follows features the chorale stated plainly in dialogue with the warbling accompaniment, written in strict invertible counterpoint. A chirpy, light-hearted canonic coda concludes the movement. The brisk, dance-like Fugue is full of vitality and demands high rhythmic independence of the fingers and feet. The chorale melody is heard again near the middle of the fugue and is combined with the fugue subject. The fugue ends with the same plenum climax as the toccata.

- Duration: 10 minutes

**Farandole** (from *L'Arlésienne, Suite No. 2*)

Georges Bizet  
1838–1875

Similar to Tchaikovsky and his *Nutcracker* music, Georges Bizet was able to achieve popular acclaim by extracting two orchestral suites from the incidental music he wrote for the play *L'Arlésienne* (The Girl from Arles). To accompany the storyline of countryside love and deception, Bizet employs several folk-like melodies throughout the work. In the **Farandole**, which concludes the second suite, we hear two French folk tunes: the stately *La Marcho di Rei* (The March of the Kings) and the light-hearted *Danse dei Chivau-Frus*. The two themes alternate with each other as energy builds, until both themes are sounded simultaneously, leading to the climax and a festive conclusion. *Transcription for organ by Joel Hastings*

• **Duration: 4 minutes**

**Jesus Loves Me** (from *Gospel Preludes*)

William Bolcom  
b. 1938

Grammy-award-winning composer William Bolcom has achieved renown for creating a unique voice that melds together eclectic musical styles with surprising freshness and inventiveness. The *Gospel Preludes*, commissioned in 1979 by the Dallas chapter of the American Guild of Organists, are no exception to Bolcom's goal to erase boundaries between popular music and art music. We expect more reverential music to come from the pipe organ, but the skill and humor with which Bolcom mixes his styles and genres gives him considerable leeway to explore the instrument's lighter side.

"Jesus Loves Me" is set in a gentle 12/8 gospel swing, and, like the other Preludes in the set, is in theme-and-variations form. The simple children's tune is accompanied from above and below by rhythmic motifs decorated by the occasional mordant, giving a slightly neo-Classical character to the voicing. As the harmonies shift seamlessly between classic tonality, bluesy riffs, and brazen dissonances, the gentle lilt is all the while present, providing unity and a beautifully childlike assurance to the music that echoes the sentiments of the hymn text. Each variation offers the performer a new opportunity to showcase different colors and stops of the instrument; the final variation builds to a grand climax, and then disappears gradually to the softest and purest sounds of the organ.

• **Duration: 7 minutes**

**Final** (from *Symphony No. 6*) ♦ Op. 59

Louis Vierne  
1870–1937

Vierne carried on the French Romantic tradition pioneered by his teachers César Franck and Charles-Marie Widor. The influence of his teachers is evident in his compositions — his use of melodic development owes greatly to that of Franck, while his clear command of counterpoint and classical forms demonstrates Widor's influence. The Sixth Symphony marks the last of his organ symphonies and showcases the height of Vierne's mature style. It was written in the summer of 1930 at the home of Madeleine Richepin, who acted as Vierne's primary support and encouragement through his darkest years. The final movement is a snazzy burlesque in rondo form, full of unbridled *joie de vivre*. The lyrical subject of the central, contrasted episode returns at the conclusion of the piece in combination with the movement's primary material in grand statement, accompanied by cascading pedal scales.

• **Duration: 8 minutes**

♦ *Program notes by Aaron Tan* ♦



**Please join us for a reception in the Gathering Area following the program.**  
**FREE ICE CREAM FOR ALL!**

**Your presence and generosity are welcome. A freewill offering in support of  
Music at St Philip Concerts will be received at the Sanctuary exits.**  
**Donations may be made by cash, check or credit card.**



# MUSIC AT ST. PHILIP 2019-2020 SEASON

Announcing our new music season! Join us for these exciting programs!

## ◆ CONCERT SERIES ◆

### Concert for Peace

MUSIC & POETRY

Saturday | **OCTOBER 5** | 7:30 p.m.  
*with guitarist Marc Garvin and poetry reading*

### Semper Fantasticus

BAROQUE CHAMBER MUSIC

Sunday | **NOVEMBER 10** | 5:00 p.m.  
*with Elizabeth Blumenstock violin  
Mary Springfels viola da gamba  
and Matthew Dirst harpsichord*

### Greenbriar Consortium

CLASSICAL AND MODERN CHAMBER MUSIC

Sunday | **DECEMBER 1** | 6:00 p.m.  
*and*

Sunday | **JANUARY 19** | 6:00 p.m.  
*with Houston Symphony Chamber Musicians  
in two different programs*

### Night Jazz for Leap Day

PIANO • INSTRUMENTS • VOCALS

Saturday | **FEBRUARY 29** | 7:30 p.m.  
*with Paul English piano and Cecy Duarte vocals*

### Child Piano Prodigies

PIANO

Sunday | **MARCH 29** | 3:00 p.m.  
*with 2020 and past winners of the  
Rochelle Liebling Kahan Competition  
for Child Piano Prodigies Age 6-9*

## ◆ WORSHIP SERIES ◆

### Music of Commemoration

RUTTER *REQUIEM*

Sunday | **NOVEMBER 3** | 11:00 a.m.  
*Music for All Saints Sunday*

### Music of Expectation

ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS

Sunday | **DECEMBER 8** | 11:00 a.m.  
*Music for the Season of Advent*

### Music of Meditation

MATTHEW DIRST • CECILIA DUARTE • RANDALL SWANSON

Saturday | **APRIL 11** | 5:00 p.m.  
*Music for the Stillness of Holy Saturday*

### Music of Resurrection

ST. PHILIP CHOIR • ORGAN • BELLS

Sunday | **APRIL 12** | 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.  
*Music for Easter Sunday*

## ◆ FRITTS ORGAN TENTH ANNIVERSARY ◆

### Vernet-Meckler Organ Duet

ORGAN

Sunday | **APRIL 19** | 2:00 p.m.  
Olivier Vernet and Cédric Meckler  
*transcriptions of incidental and ballet music by  
Rameau • Mendelssohn • Stravinsky • Ravel  
celebrating the 10th anniversary of the St. Philip Fritts Organ*

All events are free. Contributions welcome. We hope to see you here!

St. Philip Presbyterian Church ◆ 4807 San Felipe Street ◆ Houston, Texas



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