

Firm Foundations

Jerrick Cavagnaro

2024 First Prize Winner
American Guild of Organists
National Competition in
Organ Improvisation

The organ of Trinity Church
Copley Square, Boston

Pro Organo
7312

Pro Organo

Audio Producer / Engineer, Post-Production,
Audio Mastering and Photos
(except where noted): Frederick Hohman,
ProOrgano.com
AGO Production Coordinator:
Molly Davey
Recorded on 16 & 17 March 2025 at
Trinity Church, Copley Square,
Boston, Massachusetts USA

Firm Foundations
Improvisations by Jerrick Cavagnaro

Program Notes from the Artist

Dear Listener,

In this album I wish to present a program of both improvised music and repertoire. I have always had a great love and admiration for improvisation. Dating back to my early years as a young piano student, I enjoyed creating my own pieces, both on the fly and written down. My musical flame was only fanned further by consecutive summers spent playing keyboard and singing in a rock and roll summer camp as a middle and high schooler all the while singing in church and school choirs. I think my experiences in both church and rock camp set me up to appreciate a wide variety of musical styles, something which I believe is evident in my improvisation and playing. Thus the music on this disc, both improvised and written, is varied and diverse. In selecting the repertoire, I aimed to include works outside the standard organ canon — pieces that are less frequently performed and that suited the character of the organs at Trinity Church, Boston.

Trinity's two organs (nave and chancel) are playable from one console. In 2018, a complete restoration of the Nave organ was undertaken, harkening back to what Skinner envisioned in his 1926 American Symphonic installation. Given its breadth of color, warmth, fire and my familiarity with the instrument, it seemed the obvious choice of venue for this album. This will be the debut solo organ album recorded since the 2018 restoration. It is my hope you will enjoy its beauty and depth through this varied selection of repertoire and improvisations.

The music of **Florence Price** has enjoyed a rightful rise in popularity in the last decade. The first African American woman to have a work performed by a major American Symphony orches-

tra, Price's compositional style fuses elements of Western classical and traditional African American music. Price modeled her ***First Sonata for Organ*** closely after Alexandre Guilmant's *Sonata in D minor, Op. 42*, which she performed for the composer while a student at New England Conservatory. Guilmant is said to have congratulated her publicly for her execution of the difficult number. Despite its similarities with the Guilmant, Price breathes her own unique voice into the work through American-sounding harmonies and motives. Here I present the first movement alone. An almost Germanic introduction gives way to the exposition of the main theme (in a minor mode) played by the pedal alone. This is followed by a second theme, lighter in character. A development ensues until a more grandiose recapitulation of the second theme on full organ. Price ends the piece on a more serious note, returning to the drive of the first theme and concluding on a sinister D minor chord.

Price would have been familiar with the American Symphonic organs being built in the early 1900s, which I believe is why her sonata is so well suited to Trinity's newly restored organ. In fact, she wrote this sonata only one year after Skinner's 1926 installation of the Trinity organ. I have taken liberties in departing from Price's minimal registrations in order to more fully orchestrate this movement. Given Price's imaginative orchestrations in her larger scale orchestral works, the Trinity organ's wealth of colors, and her familiarity with organs of this type I hope Ms. Price would approve.

In the final round of the American Guild of Organists' (AGO) National Competition in Organ Improvisation (NCOI) in 2024, competitors were tasked with leading a congregational hymn that included a creative introduction, interlude, and reharmonized last verse. I was delighted to discover the hymn was ***How firm a foundation*** to the tune FOUNDATION, one I knew and loved and had grown up singing in church. This tune first appeared in Joseph Funk's *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*, an early shape-note tunebook published in 1832 that was influential in the American South. It later appeared in the more famous 1835 tunebook *Southern Harmony*. The hymntune's melody, like most early American folk tunes, is pentatonic and rhythmic. The 13 variations I present here were inspired, in part, by the final round of NCOI. The variations offer an array of 21st century harmonizations, accompaniments, styles, and modes and once again showcase the symphonic splendor and tonal diversity of Trinity's organs.

Brenda Portman's ***Scherzo*** was commissioned by the AGO for the semifinal round of AGO's NCOI in 2024. On the more serious side of scherzo, which means "joke" in Italian, this piece has quickly become a favorite of mine. Portman weaves a lyrical melody together with a spirited figuration until all comes to a halt. A slower, more contemplative section proceeds with the main theme in canon between the pedal and right hand until the spirited configuration returns, this time more relentless. In her registration instructions, Portman indicates an optional crescendo to the end. I almost always follow this to support the piece's drive.

Brenda Portman's *Scherzo* was originally programmed for this recording in its Compact Disc release format, but the original program was longer than could be placed on a Compact Disc; therefore, Ms. Portman's *Scherzo* is being made available by the Pro Organo label digitally, as a "bonus track," which may be accessed and downloaded at no charge at the label webiste:

https://www.proorgano.com/product/scherzo-by-brenda-portman

A note about John La Farge

Artist John La Farge revolutionized the art of stained glass. His technique involved the use of opalescent glass which had previously only been used to make tableware. Opalescent glass contains tiny pieces of opaque particles, resulting in a milky appearance. La Farge layered this glass to create effects of light and color that were groundbreaking in this medium. His work may seem reminiscent of that of Louis Comfort Tiffany and that is because he introduced Tiffany to his opalescent glass techniques. Relations between the two men soured thanks in part to each securing a patent for their respective stained glass techniques, which, for all intents and purposes, were really quite similar. Trinity Church is blessed with five La Farge stained glass windows and several of his painted murals. The four windows on this album can be found in the Sanctuary of Trinity Church. The fifth window, not included in this album, is found in the Parish House of Trinity Church.

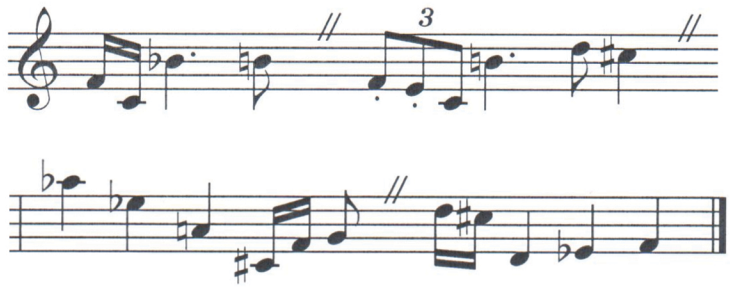
Program notes about my organ improvistions inspired by 4 John La Farge windows are found with photos of the windows on pages 9 through 12 of this booklet.

Although perhaps more known for his orchestral and operatic output, **Camille Saint-Saëns** left behind a modest but significant legacy of organ works. Among the lesser-known of these is his ***Fantaisie No. 2 in D flat***, dedicated to Queen

Carmen Sylva, the pen name of Elisabeth of Wied, queen of Romania, who published a large number of writings including poems, plays, novels, etc. Unlike his first, more popular, *Fantaisie in E flat*, this one is more richly expressive and intimate. The *D-flat Fantaisie* is a study in elegance and restraint. Its gentle harmonic language, poised lyricism, and clear formal design reflect Saint-Saëns' classical sensibilities, tempered by Romantic color. The music unfolds in a single, continuous movement, embracing a loosely rhapsodic structure that suggests improvisational freedom while remaining harmonically and thematically coherent. Melodic lines drift gracefully through modulations, supported by flowing textures and subtle counterpoint — hallmarks of Saint-Saëns' mature style. Like the Price, the Saint-Saëns is particularly well suited to the Trinity organ's symphonic nature and array of tonal color.

The solemn tone ***Salve Regina*** is one of my favorite Gregorian chants. Employing the dorian mode, it makes the perfect theme for a modal improvisation. The text of the chant implores the clement, loving, and sweet Virgin Mary to pray for us poor sinners in exile. My improvisation explores the moods of lament and hope of this antiphon through the use of highly modal harmonies.

I would like to thank my former professor of improvisation Jeffrey Brillhart for a most "Brill"iant theme. His theme, which seems to defy tonality, seemed the perfect foil to the rest of the album which is more or less tonal. In this improvisation I took inspiration from organist-composers Anton Heiller and Thierry Escaich with their post-modern harmonies and jaunty rhythms. The notation of the theme follows:.



My ***Toccata and fugue*** began its life as an improvisation. During my time as a master's student at Yale University, I took a job as the Friday morning chapel organist at the Divinity School's Marquand Chapel. The main theme for this toccata came to me in the middle of one of these morning services. After working out a figuration and structure, I improvised a very rough version of the toccata. Following the service, a friend remarked that I ought to write it down. However, it was not for another 5 years until I decided to fully flesh it out on paper. I added a fugue based on the toccata theme which devolves back into a furious toccata. Throughout both the

toccata and fugue I employ melodies almost reminiscent of musical theater interposed with whole tone and octatonic modes.



An on-line video about the making of this album, including commentary from the artist, and performance segments from selections on this album, acquired during the recording sessions, may be found at:

https://vimeo.com/1080719395



Artist Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Trinity Church for allowing me to record in their glorious space on their even more glorious instrument. I would also like to thank:

- all my former organ and improvisation instructors: Alan Morrison, Jason Roberts, Thomas Murray, Jon Laukvik, and Jeffrey Brillhart
- my former and current mentors and colleagues: Joshua Stafford, Walden Moore, John Peragallo III, and Colin Lynch
- Dave and Dan Graessle who ran Rock-in Summer Camp where I learned to appreciate popular music styles and playing in an ensemble
- My high school organ teacher Gary Sabak, who introduced me to the world of Anglican church music
- Carol Newman, my first piano and organ teacher who laid the foundation for my musical life and first introduced me to the world of improvisation
- And finally, my friends and family for their support of my musical journey.



ALBUM TRACK LIST & TIMINGS

All improvisations are by Jerrick Cavagnaro.

1 **Florence B. Price** [1887-1953]
First Sonata for Organ [1927]
I. Maestoso – Allegro • 9:30

2 **Improvisation on the hymn-tune FOUNDATION ("How Firm a Foundation")** • 15:32

Improvisations on 4 La Farge Windows of Trinity Church, Boston • 19:51

3 ***Presentation of the Virgin*** • 5:52
4 ***The Resurrection*** • 3:42
5 ***The New Jerusalem*** • 5:19
6 ***Christ in Majesty*** • 4:58

7 **Camille Saint-Saëns** [1835-1921]
Fantaisie No. 2 in D-flat major, Opus 101 [1895] • 12:51

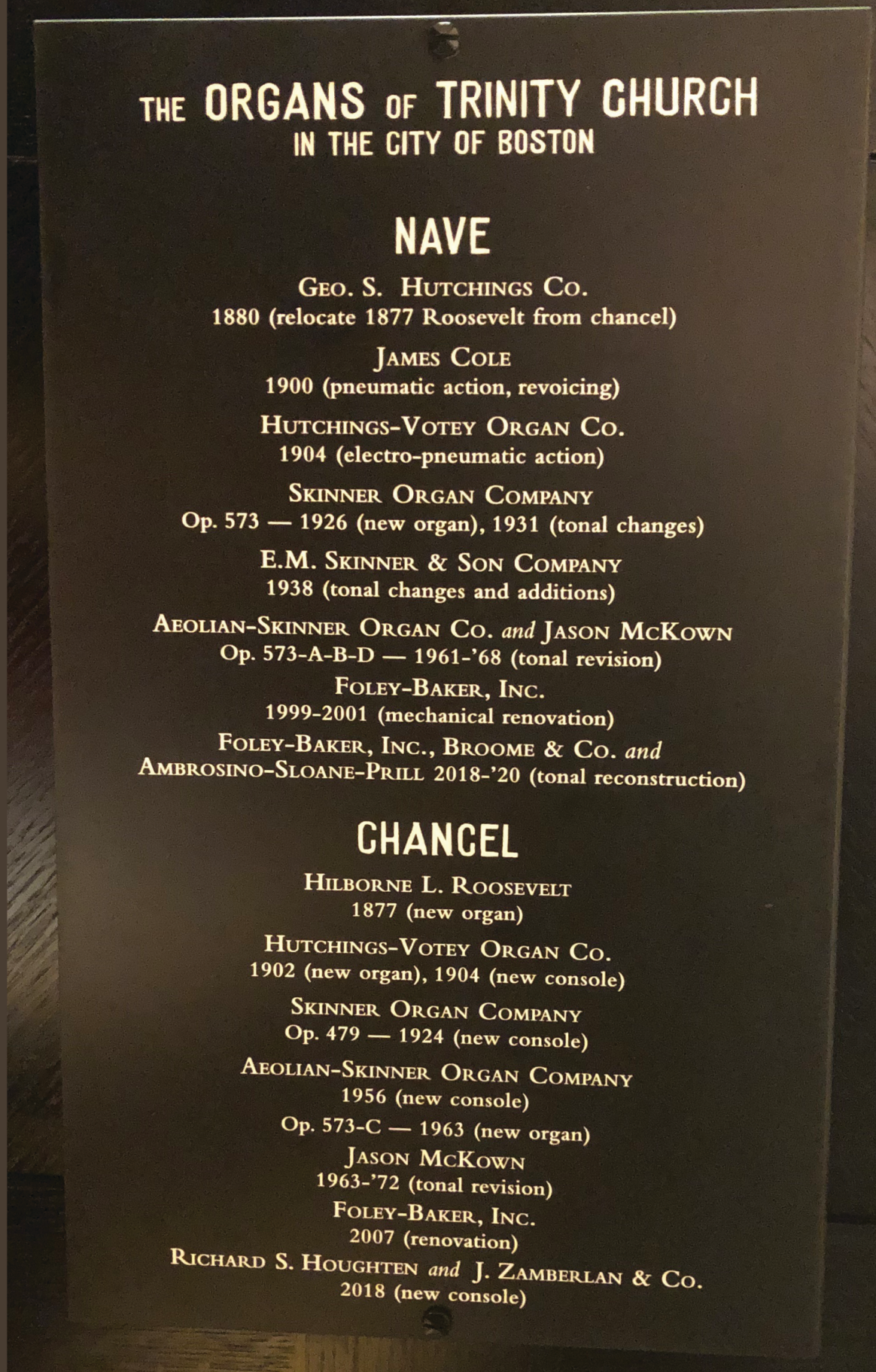
8 **Improvisation on *Salve Regina*** • 7:31

9 **Improvisation on a theme by Jeffrey Brillhart** • 2:56

10 **Jerrick Cavagnaro** [b. 1996]
Toccata and Fugue • 9:22

Total program time: 77′ 34″

Bonus Track, Free Download On-Line at:
ProOrgano.com • Search word: 7312
Brenda Portman • *Scherzo* [2023]
4:27 • © Brenda Portman. All rights reserved.

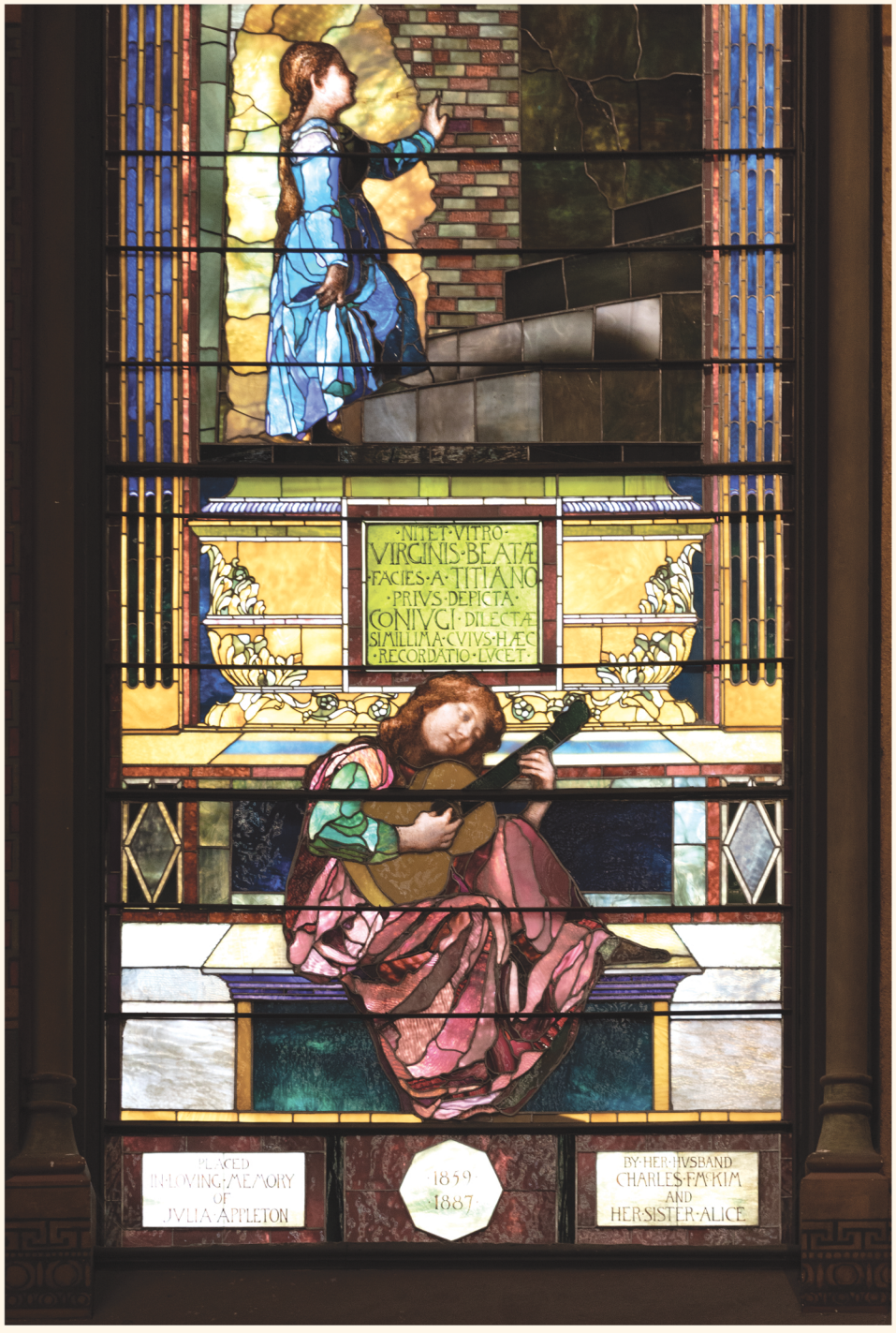


At right,
a bronze plaque is installed
in the chancel organ console,
showing the chronology
of the Nave and Chancel pipe
organs in Trinity Church,
Copley Square, Boston.

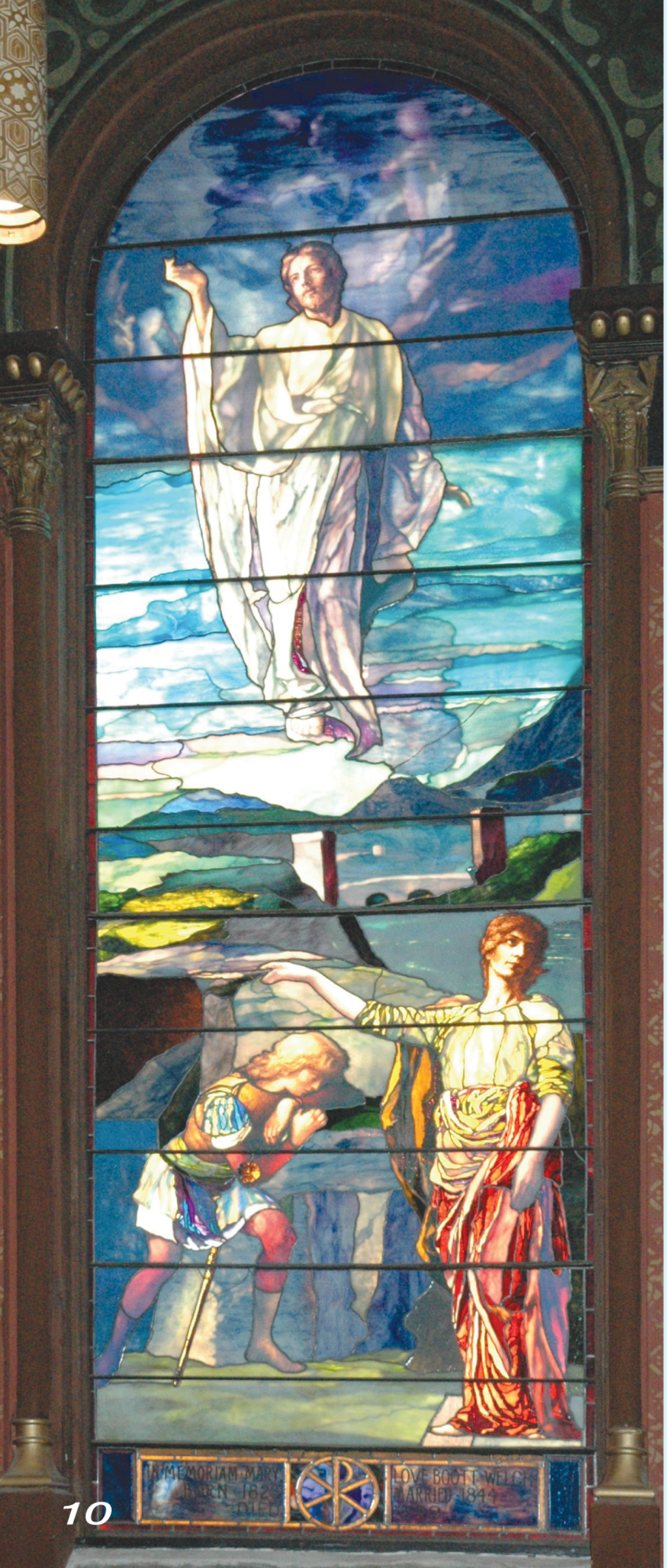
The scene depicted in this window, entitled "Presentation of the Virgin," serves as Biblical inspiration in the first of Jerrick's free organ improvisations on four selected Trinity Church windows.

The improvisation on "The Presentation of the Virgin" appears as album TRACK 3.

Based on a painting by Italian Renaissance artist Titian, John La Farge's ***Presentation of the Virgin*** was created for his friend, architect Charles Follen McKim, whose young wife, Julia Amory Appleton had died in childbirth. La Farge puts the young girl from Titian's painting center stage as she walks up the Temple steps. What strikes me about this window is its gentleness. Surrounding this young girl, who represents both the young Virgin Mary and Appleton entering heaven, is a radiant glow which I have depicted with a super-coupled flute stop and erzähler celeste stops. Perched on the lower portion of this window is another young girl strumming a lute. I used the harp and celesta to portray her strumming. Also heard is the *Ave regina coelorum* (Hail queen of heaven) chant, the appointed Marian antiphon for the feast of the Presentation of the Virgin, November 21.



Window photos on pages 9 through 12 provided courtesy of Trinity Church, Copley Square, Boston.



The scene depicted in this window, entitled "The Resurrection," serves as Biblical inspiration in the second of Jerrick's free organ improvisations on four selected Trinity Church windows.

The improvisation on "The Resurrection" appears as album TRACK 4.

In ***The Resurrection*** window, the risen Jesus appears above two figures; one looking in the empty tomb and the other, dressed in a fabulous yellow garment, pointing away. My improvisation here begins with the earthquake after Jesus' death and the bitterness of the tomb. After all, you cannot have Easter without Good Friday. Then a chromatic ascent depicts Jesus' rising from the dead. Triumphant chords and flourishes announce the risen Christ with quotes of the popular Easter hymn, *Jesus Christ is risen today* in the pedal.

The scene depicted in this window, entitled "The New Jerusalem," serves as Biblical inspiration in the third of Jerrick's free organ improvisations on four selected Trinity Church windows.

The improvisation on "The New Jerusalem" appears as album TRACK 5.

La Farge based his ***Ieposolyma, the New Jerusalem*** window on Revelation 21:2-5:

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

In this window, John, the author of the Book of Revelation, is depicted in the dark, lower left-hand corner. An angel directs his gaze heavenward where he sees The New Jerusalem complete with angels, a figure in dazzling robes, and a rainbow above the city. My improvisation begins somberly with a diapason melody. Tension builds as the angel has just shown John images of death and hell in the previous chapter of Revelation until a gentle burst of light shines forth on the string celestes. The claribella flute then makes an appearance along with snippets of the *In Paradisum* chant. Traditionally sung at Catholic funerals, this chant asks that God and his angels lead the souls of the departed into Paradise (the New Jerusalem). Content with what has just been revealed to him, this improvisation ends on a blissful note.





The scene depicted in this window, entitled "Christ in Majesty," serves as Biblical inspiration in the fourth of Jerrick's free organ improvisations on four selected Trinity Church windows.

The improvisation on "Christ in Majesty" appears as album TRACK 6.

Phillips Brooks, former rector of Trinity Church when its current 1877 building was constructed, asked La Farge to create a window in the back of the church that would face him while he stood in the pulpit to inspire his preaching. La Farge created this window, known as *Christ Preaching* or ***Christ in Majesty***, depicting a glorious, larger than life Jesus holding a book in one hand and giving a blessing with the other. Of special note is the blue background, made up of round nuggets of glass about the size of an egg, called cabochons. My improvisation for *Christ in Majesty* is an energetic fanfare, depicting the vigor and pomp of Christ as a preacher and king. Featured are the unenclosed trompette (en chamade), tuba, great reed chorus, and swell reed chorus.

First Prize Winners in the American Guild of Organists' **National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance** (AGO NYACOP) receive a Pro Organo release as a key component of the First Prize. Since 2005, albums and NYACOP winners have been:

2022 Winner **James Kealey**
Rhapsodic - Pro Organo CD 7305

2020 Winner **-** *no winner, due to COVID*

2018 Winner **Aaron Tan**
Impressions - Pro Organo CD 7284

2016 Winner **Katelyn Emerson**
Evocations - Pro Organo CD 7277

2014 Winner **Jonathan Rudy**
Three Halls - Pro Organo CD 7268

2012 Winner **Daryl Robinson**
Sempre Organo - Pro Organo CD 7261

2010 Winner **Dongho Lee**
Modal Inspiration - Pro Organo CD 7245

2008 Winner **Michael Unger**
Universe of Poetry - Pro Organo CD 7235

2006 Winner **Scott Montgomery**
Water and Light - Pro Organo CD 7224

2004 Winner **Yoon-mi Lim**
Gifts from Above - Pro Organo CD 7205

Pro Organo has also released the following albums from recent previous NCOI First Prize Winners:

2022 Winner **Robert Horton**
On Impulse
Pro Organo CD 7308

2020 Winner **Ivan Bosnar**
Form and Function
Pro Organo CD 7301

2018 Winner **Kalle Toivio**
Improvisations at St. Ignatius
Pro Organo CD 7286

Please find these titles, and many more choral and organ music titles on Compact Disc, DVD, and Blu-ray Disc on-line at: **ProOrgano.com**.

The **American Guild of Organists'** (AGO) **National Competition in Organ Improvisation** (NCOI) advances the art of improvisation by recognizing and rewarding superior performers in the field. Improvisation is the pinnacle of achievement for a musician who can combine the elements of performance and composition simultaneously in the creation of a new work of art. Since 1990, the AGO NCOI has motivated and inspired hundreds of the most talented organists in America. Today, it is the pre-eminent competition in North America dedicated to preserving and advancing improvisation at the organ. The competition is open to all regardless of age or country of citizenship. Details and official rules of the competition are published in **The American Organist** magazine and may also be found at: **www.agohq.org.**



Award-winning organist, improviser, and composer **Jerrick Cavagnaro** is an emerging young artist equally comfortable in the fields of sacred and secular music. He currently serves as the associate director of music at Trinity Church, Copley Square in Boston, Massachusetts, where he accompanies and co-conducts the adult choirs and choristers. Jerrick is First Prize winner of the American Guild of Organists' National Competition in Organ Improvisation (NCOI), held in San Francisco in the summer of 2024. He won second prize in the National Competition in Organ Accompaniment sponsored by the Washington, D.C. AGO chapter and third prize in the Quebec Organ Competition in Quebec City, Canada.

As a composer, Jerrick's choral works have been performed internationally. His arrangement of *Masters in this Hall* was included in Oxford University Press' *Carols for Choirs 6*. He is winner of the 2022 *Liturgy Alive! Composition Competition* at University of Notre Dame in the mixed choir category. Two of his arrangements appear on Trinity Church Boston's 2024 critically-acclaimed Christmas album *The Great Glad Tidings Tell*, which reached the number one spot on the classical Billboard charts. Jerrick's accompaniments on that album drew praise from a critic with *The American Organist* magazine.

An avid improviser and teacher, Jerrick incorporates improvisation into his instructional method for both piano and organ. Taking inspiration from multiple genres, including classical, pop, rock, and more, his improvisational style is eclectic and unique. He is comfortable improvising in both liturgical and concert settings.

Jerrick is a graduate of the Yale School of Music and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music where he earned a master's degree in organ performance studying under Jon Laukvik and Thomas Murray. He completed his undergraduate studies at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, where he earned a bachelor's degree in sacred music and organ performance studying under Alan Morrison. A native of New Jersey, prior to his appointment at Trinity Church, Boston, Jerrick served in several church music positions in North Carolina, Connecticut and New Jersey.

Jerrick is available for solo concerts, masterclasses, private lessons, or as an accompanist. His contact form may be accessed at his website: **https://www.jerrickcavagnaro.com**

Organ Specification • NAVE ORGAN: Skinner Organ Co. Opus 573, 1926
Tonal reconstruction: Foley-Baker and Jonathan Ambrosino, 2019

GREAT
6" pressure, unenclosed

16 Diapason (1-18 facade)
16 Bourdon (Pedal)
8 First Diapason
8 Second Diapason
8 Third Diapason
8 Claribel Flute
8 Erzähler
4 Octave
4 Flute
2-2/3 Twelfth
2 Fifteenth
Mixture [IV]

enclosed in Solo, 10" pressure

16 Ophicleide
8 Tromba
4 Clarion
Chimes (Solo)
Unison Off

PEDAL
6" pressure, unenclosed

32 Resultant
32 Bourdon
16 First Diapason
16 Second Diapason
16 Violone
16 Bourdon
16 Dulciana (Choir)
16 Echo Bourdon (Swell)
8 Octave
8 Diapason (Great. 16)
8 Cello
8 Gedeckt
8 Still Gedeckt (Swell)
4 Octave (Great. 16)

SWELL
7-1/2" pressure, enclosed

16 Bourdon
8 Diapason
8 Salicional
8 Voix Celeste
8 Stopped Diapason
8 Flauto Dolce
8 Flute Celeste (tenor C)
4 Octave
4 Flute
2 Flautino
Quint Mixture [III]
Chorus Mixture [IV]
16 Posaune
8 Cornopean
8 Trumpet
8 Oboe
8 Vox Humana
4 Clarion
Tremolo
Swell 16
Unison Off
Swell 4

PEDAL continued

4 Flute
16 Posaune (Swell)
Chimes (Solo)
32 Bombarde #
16 Trombone
8 Tromba
4 Clarion
Tuba Mirabilis to Pedal
Unenclosed Trumpet to Pedal

= CC-AA on 20" pressure, remainder of stop 10"

CHOIR
6" pressure, enclosed

16 Dulciana
8 Diapason
8 Viola
8 Melodia
8 Kleine Erzähler
8 Erzähler Celeste (tenor C)
4 Fugara
4 Flute d-Amour
2-2/3 Nazard (tenor c)
2 Piccolo
1-3/5 Tierce (tenor c)
8 Orchestral Trumpet
8 Corno di Bassetto
8 Orchestral Oboe
Tremolo
Harp (ext.)
Celesta
Choir 16
Unison Off
Choir 4
Tuba Mirabilis to Choir
Unenclosed Trumpet to Choir

NAVE COUPLERS

Great to Pedal
Swell to Pedal
Choir to Pedal
Solo to Pedal
Swell to Pedal 4
Choir to Pedal 4
Solo to Pedal 4

Swell to Great
Choir to Great
Solo to Great
Swell to Choir
Solo to Choir
Great to Choir
Pedal to Choir

SOLO
10" pressure, enclosed

8 Gamba
8 Gamba Celeste
8 Concert Flute
8 French Horn
8 English Horn
Tremolo
Chimes

20" pressure

8 Tuba Mirabilis
8 Unenclosed Trumpet
Chimes (G-g)
Solo 16
Unison Off
Solo 4

NAVE COUPLERS continued

Choir to Swell
Solo to Swell

Great to Solo
Swell to Solo

Swell to Great 16
Choir to Great 16
Solo to Great 16
Swell to Great 4
Choir to Great 4
Solo to Great 4

Swell to Choir 16
Solo to Choir 16
Swell to Choir 4
Solo to Choir 4

Organ Specification • CHANCEL ORGAN: Aeolian-Skinner Organ Co. Opus 573-C, 1963
Mechanical renovation: Foley-Baker, Inc., 2007 • Console: Richard Houghten and J. Zamberlan & Co., 2018

GREAT
enclosed in Choir

8 Principal
4 Octave
Plein Jeu IV
8 Viola (Choir)
8 Hohlflute (Pedal)
8 Cor de Nuit (Choir)
4 Flute (Choir)
2-2/3 Nazard (Choir)
2 Harmonic Piccolo (Choir)
1-3/5 Tierce (Choir)
8 Oboe (Choir)
Unison Off

PEDAL
enclosed in Swell (+)
enclosed in Choir (*)

16 Violone (Choir ext.) +
16 Bourdon *
16 Dulciana (Choir)
16 Lieblich Gedeckt (Swell)
8 Principal *
8 Gedeckt (Swell)
4 Octave *
4 Hohlflute +
2 Flute +
Fourniture III *
16 Contre Trompette (Swell)
16 Bombard +
8 Trompette +
8 Oboe (Choir)
4 Clairon +
Unison Off

SWELL
enclosed

16 Lieblich Gedeckt
8 Principal
8 Viola de Gamba
8 Viole Celeste
8 Gedeckt
8 Flauto Dolce
8 Flute Celeste (tenor C)
4 Principal
4 Chimney Flute
2 Flageolet
1-1/3 Larigot
1 Piccolo
Mixture IV
16 Contre Trompette
8 Trompette
4 Clarion
Tremolo
Swell 16
Unison Off
Swell 4

CHANCEL COUPLERS

Great to Pedal
Swell to Pedal
Choir to Pedal
Swell to Pedal 4
Choir to Pedal 4

Swell to Great
Choir to Great
Swell to Choir
Great to Choir
Pedal to Choir

Swell to Great 16
Choir to Great 16
Swell to Great 4
Choir to Great 4
Swell to Choir 16
Swell to Choir 4

CHOIR
6" pressure, enclosed

16 Dulciana
8 Viola
8 Cor de Nuit
8 Lieblich Gedeckt
8 Dulciana
8 Unda Maris (tenor C)
4 Gemshorn
4 Flute
2-2/3 Nazard
2 Harmonic Piccolo
1-3/5 Tierce
Mixture III
8 Oboe
8 Clarinet
4 English Horn
Tremolo
Choir 16
Unison Off
Choir 4

AFFECTING BOTH ORGANS

Generals 1-32
Solo 1-6
Swells 1-10
Greats 1-10
Choirs 1-10
Pedals 1-6
Expression Matrix 1-6
Reversibles for all manual
    to Pedal coulers
Reversible for 32 Bourdon
Reversible for 32 Bombarde
All Divisionals Next
All Generals Next
Level Go To

SPECIAL FUNCTIONS
(tablets)

Pedal Divide (adjustable)
Rev. Great and Choir Manuals
All Swells to III
Expression Matrix on Generals
    (sets current Matrix
    selection on General)

EXPRESSION MATRIX

Assigns any of the six swell fronts to any or all of the four balanced shoes. If a swell front is assigned to more than one pedal, whichever shoe is most open governs the shutter position.

Matrix selections can be set on generals as desired through the use of "Expressiono Matrix on Gerals" tablet.

GO TO FUNCTION

For direct level access, depress GO TO and enter the level number using Genrals 1-10 as numbers 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-0.

For a more detailed specification that includes the number of pipes, bars, or tubes per rank, please visit the Trinity Church, Boston, website.

Notes on Trinity Church and its organ from the Organ Curator.

Forty-five hundred trees pounded into the alluvial muck of Boston's Back Bay hold up Trinity Church, a perennial presence on the American Institute of Architect's shortlist of greatest buildings in America. Three men in their thirties made it happen: Phillips Brooks, the charismatic preacher from Philadelphia, architect Henry Hobson Richardson, as yet relatively untried but with sterling Harvard connections, and an artist known only for miniature watercolors, John La Farge. Together they transformed one another and American architecture with a "color church" light years distant from the era's prevailing vocabulary. Richardson's Greek-cross plan draws upon Romanesque churches in the Auvergne region of France and the tower of Salamanca Cathedral, familiar to him only through books. John La Farge's mural program was the first in America, hastily completed under grueling winter conditions just in time for the church's dedication in February 1877. Magnificent stained glass by La Farge, Oudinot, Clayton & Bell, Edward Burne Jones and William Morris intensify the pervasive glow of Pompeian red. A number of young apprentices launched distinguished careers here, among them Augustus Saint Gaudens, Charles McKim, and Stanford White.

Trinity's original Roosevelt organ should have been a landmark, but ended up sounding cloistered in its original home of what is now the southeastern Nuns' Gallery. Phillips Brooks himself rented a little organ for the west gallery to prove the superiority of the location. By 1881, the Roosevelt had been relocated there, divided on either side of La Farge's "Christ in Majesty" window, its original stenciled façade augmented into the asymmetrical array that remains today. In 1902, Trinity instituted a vested choir of men and boys, necessitating a chancel remodeling and a new organ. Built by Hutchings-Votey, the three-manual arrived in 1902 on the northeast side; a console linking it with the gallery organ was inaugurated in April 1904.

In the organ's next chapter, Ernest Skinner and his successors ruled, starting in 1924 with a towering four-manual console and a few tonal changes. A new 54-voice gallery organ followed in 1926, which Louis Vierne singled out for praise after a recital in April 1927. When the chancel was again renovated in 1938, grilles replaced the chancel pipe fronts, and Ernest Skinner & Son made several tonal changes in both instruments. In this campaign, the 32/16-foot Bombarde of 1926 was switched out for a Fagotto, allowing Skinner to recycle the Bombarde into his organ for Washington National Cathedral.

In the next generation, Trinity's organs tacked to an American Classic course. The three-manual console Aeolian-Skinner provided in 1956 was a compact retort to its lofty predecessor; a new Aeolian-Skinner chancel organ arrived in 1963. Skinner-trained technician Jason McKown refashioned the sound of both organs in collaboration with Trinity's organist from 1954 to 1980, George Faxon. The gallery received a new Great flue chorus, and new Swell and Pedal chorus reeds from Aeolian-Skinner, among other changes by McKown himself. Over the 1960s McKown refined the chancel organ into something more homogenous and less aggressive. During the tenures of musicians Brian Jones and Michael Kleinschmidt, console upgrades and other modifications occurred. The west copper trumpet was added in 1987; voiced initially by Jack Steinkampf, it was mellowed by Austin Organs in 1994. During their 17 years of curatorship, Foley-Baker renovated the nave organ 1999-2001, and the chancel organ in 2007, leaving each in mechanically fine condition without further musical review.

When Richard Webster assumed the role of Organist-Choirmaster in 2010, he set his sights on returning the nave organ to its 1926 Skinner musical roots. Considerable vintage pipework was acquired and introduced, in a project conceived and led by Jonathan Ambrosino, collaborating principally with Foley-Baker, and assisted by Broome & Co. (reeds), Joe Sloane, Duane Prill, and Ortloff Organ Co. Both organs are controlled from a new (2018) four-manual console by Richard Houghten and J. Zamberlan & Co., designed in conjunction with Ambrosino.

Trinity's is Boston's most oft-heard pipe organ, each Sunday in morning and evening services, and Wednesday evensong. It is heard here in its solo recording debut.

Jonathan Ambrosino
Organ Curator



Additional acknowledgments and thanks.

The album producer for the Pro Organo label, Frederick Hohman, and the production coordinator for the American Guild of Organists, Molly Davey, wish to express their thanks to the Clergy, Vestry and Staff of Trinity Church, Boston, for the use of its facilities, making this recording possible, as well as to organ curator Jonathan Ambrosino, for his kind assistance in tuning the Trinity Church organ for the recording sessions.



This album is the first audio recording since the restoration of the Nave organ's 1926 tonal identity. Pictured above are the cases of the Nave organ divisions.

Firm Foundations • Jerrick Cavagnaro

2024 First Prize Winner • American Guild of Organists
National Competition in Organ Improvisation

The organ of Trinity Church • Copley Square • Boston



All improvisations are by Jerrick Cavagnaro.

1. **Florence B. Price** [1887-1953]
   First Sonata for Organ [1927]
   I. Maestoso – Allegro • 9:30
2. **Improvisation on the hymn-tune FOUNDATION ("How Firm a Foundation")** • 15:32

Improvisations on 4 La Farge Windows of Trinity Church, Boston • 19:51

3. *Presentation of the Virgin* • 5:52
4. *The Resurrection* • 3:42
5. *The New Jerusalem* • 5:19
6. *Christ in Majesty* • 4:58

7. **Camille Saint-Saëns** [1835-1921]
   Fantaisie No. 2 in D-flat major, Opus 101 [1895] • 12:51
8. **Improvisation on *Salve Regina*** • 7:31
9. **Improvisation on a theme by Jeffrey Brillhart** • 2:56
10. **Jerrick Cavagnaro** [b. 1996]
    Toccata and Fugue • 9:22

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Total time: 77′ 34″ | 7312

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