

**25th Annual  
Albert Schweitzer Organ  
Festival Hartford**



**Saturday, October 22, 2022**



# Welcome

**Welcome** to the 25th annual Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival Hartford! Founded in 1996 by David Spicer (1946–2017), a brilliant organist with a passion for mentoring musicians of all ages, ASOFH features annual competitions in organ performance and hymn-playing, with divisions for young professionals and high school students in alternating years. The Festival has grown to become one of the top organ competitions in North America, attracting applicants from South America, Europe, and Asia to compete right here in Hartford, on one of the best pipe organs in the region, the Austin Organ at Trinity College Chapel.

The 2022 festival features the biennial Young Professional Division competition. This year we will award \$29,000 in prize money, the largest single-year sum in Festival history. These prizes are truly artistic grants, easing the burden of student loans and living expenses, while providing our laureates the means to pursue additional musical opportunities.

We are also thrilled to present this year's Organ Extravaganza!—a concert featuring Grammy® Award-winning organist Paul Jacobs (who won first-prize in the very first ASOF Young Professional Competition, 1998) and the full Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Carolyn Kuan conducting. The performance also features our most recent first-prize winner of the Young Professional Competition (2019), Alexander Pattavina, who will play the organ solo part in Saint-Saëns' beloved "Organ" Symphony No. 3. You don't want to miss the chance to hear the thrilling and rarely heard pipe organ in The Bushnell's Mortensen Hall. Tickets are available at [www.bushnell.org](http://www.bushnell.org).

As a previous ASOFH competitor and prize-winner, I am especially humbled to step into my new role as Artistic Director of this venerable festival. This competition was influential in guiding my burgeoning career and I am honored to play a part in encouraging new generations of organists and organ music fans. I am very grateful to my immediate predecessor, Vaughn Mauren, and of course to David Spicer, whose dedication to this festival's mission was an inspiration to me and to dozens of other young musicians.

Finally, on behalf of our dedicated Board of Directors and staff, please allow me to extend a sincere thanks to the many institutions, patrons, foundations, and volunteers who make it possible to create a world-class organ festival right here in Connecticut.

**Christopher Houlihan**  
*Artistic Director*



# Schedule of Events

## Young Professional Competition

Each of three finalists performs a 45-minute recital including major works by J.S. Bach and César Franck, in addition to repertoire of their choosing. The competition will be judged by world-renowned organists Alcee Chriss, Isabelle Demers, and Thomas Murray. Listeners may choose to attend any or all of the recitals. This event is free of charge and open to the public.

**10:00 a.m. Theodore Cheng**

**11:00 a.m. Bruce Xu**

**12:00 p.m. A light lunch is offered in the Chapel's South Cloister**

**12:45 p.m. Aletheia Teague**

## 1:45 p.m. Hymn Playing Competition

Finalists compete once again, this time for the David C. Spicer Hymn Playing Award, demonstrating their ability to inspire and lead people in song.

## 3:00 p.m. Pre-concert Talk

Join Carolyn Kuan and Paul Jacobs, Grammy® Award-winning organist, for a 30-minute pre-concert talk in William H. Mortensen Hall at The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts. This is a ticketed event. Tickets are available at [www.bushnell.org](http://www.bushnell.org)

## 4:00 p.m. Organ Extravaganza!

The Festival concludes with a concert featuring organist Paul Jacobs (1998 ASOF First Prize-winner), Alexander Pattavina (2019 ASOF First Prize-winner), and the full Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Carolyn Kuan conducting. The performance will highlight the Bushnell's rarely heard 1929 Austin organ, with its 5,409 pipes installed into the mammoth sidewalls of Mortensen Hall.



# The Biennial Young Professional Competition

10:00 a.m.

The Young Professional Competition is open to organists who have earned a high school/secondary school degree (as of January 1, 2022) up through and including young professionals aged 26 (as of the date of the competition).

## Preliminary Round

Each applicant submitted an audio recording which included:

- 1. One of the following works by J.S. Bach:**
  - Prelude and Fugue in A minor, BWV 543
  - Prelude and Fugue in D major, BWV 532
  - Fantasy and Fugue in G minor, BWV 542
- 2. Andante Sostenuto, from *Symphonie Gothique*, Charles-Marie Widor**
- 3. A major work composed after 1937**

The judges for the preliminary round were James Barry, Scott Lamlein, and Kari Magg.

## Final Round

Each finalist will perform a 45–50 minute public recital. In addition to repertoire of the competitor's choosing, the program must include each of the following:

- 1. One of the six Trio Sonatas of J.S. Bach**
- 2. One of the Three Chorals of César Franck**
- 3. A work by a woman or BIPOC composer**

The judges for the final round are Alcee Chriss, Isabelle Demers, and Thomas Murray.

## Prizes

All prizes will be announced and awarded during intermission at the Organ Extravaganza! festival concert.

**First Prize: \$15,000** and an invitation to perform a full-length recital at Trinity College during ASOFH 2023.

**Second Prize: \$7,500**

**Third Prize: \$3,500**

**Audience Prize: \$500**

*Any audience member attending all three competition performances is eligible to vote for the winner of the Audience Prize.*

# The Finalists

10:00 a.m.

## Theodore Cheng



Theodore Cheng is a Hong Kong-born organist and composer with a cosmopolitan upbringing and a diverse range of interests and projects that extends well beyond the realm of music. Theodore is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Organ Performance at the Juilliard School, studying with Paul Jacobs under full funding as a C.V. Starr Doctoral Fellow. Prior to arriving at Juilliard, he attained an M.M. at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, studying organ with Craig Cramer. He has held positions as the Peter B. Knock Intern in Sacred Music at Rye Presbyterian Church, and Co-Organist and Choir Director at the Berkeley Divinity School. Theodore is a prizewinner at the 2022 Fort Wayne National Organ Playing Competition, and has performed across three continents, specializing in the pre-baroque and contemporary repertoire. As a composer, his choral and organ works have been performed by choirs and ensembles in the U.S. and in Hong Kong. In his spare time, Theodore enjoys singing Gregorian chant, writing poetry, and visiting art museums.

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## Program

**Prelude "Vision in Flames" (1996)**

**Akira Nishimura (b. 1953)**

**Choral no. 1 in E major**

**César Franck (1822–1890)**

**Trio Sonata no. 2 in C minor, BWV 526**

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)**

**I. Vivace**

**II. Largo**

**III. Allegro**

**Spitfire Prelude and Fugue (1942)**

**William Walton (1902–1983)  
trans. Theodore Cheng**

11:00 a.m.

**Bruce Xu**



Bruce Xu, 19, is from Sloatsburg, New York. He attends Rice University in Houston, TX, where he studied with professor Ken Cowan. He was introduced to the grand pipe organ and the Protestant Church in his local Sloatsburg Methodist Church. Within a month, he started organ lessons with Jimrae Lenser at age 9, and then went on to study with Craig Williams. Bruce continued his studies at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts high school, where he studied organ performance with Dr. Timothy Olsen and sang with the Cantata Singers (of UNCSA). Bruce was also Music Intern at Augsburg Lutheran Church. At age 14 alone, Bruce won First Prize in six organ competitions: UNCSA/Salem College High School Organ Festival & Competition (Winston-Salem, NC); Greater Columbia AGO Chapter Young Organist Competition (Columbia, SC); East Carolina Univ. Young Artist Organ Competition (Greenville, NC); L. Cameron Johnson Memorial Organ Competition (Storrs, CT); AGO Quimby/RCYO Chapter Competition (Atlanta, GA); and AGO Quimby/RCYO Regional Competition (Jacksonville, FL). As the medalist of the regional, Bruce appeared in a “Rising Star” performance during the 2018 National Convention of the American Guild of Organists (Kansas City, MO). He’s won a couple more competitions since then. A few of the concert venues at which Bruce has played include Basilica Santa Maria in Mataro, Spain; Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine in FL; Balboa Park Spreckels Organ Pavilion in San Diego, CA; Wanamaker Organ in Philadelphia, PA; Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center, NYC; and Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, France. Bruce thoroughly enjoys playing classical piano in solo and chamber settings and singing all styles. He also enjoys reading, playing team sports, and fitness.

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## Program

**Ride of the Valkyries, from *Die Walküre***

**Richard Wagner (1813–1883)**  
**arr. Edwin H. Lemare (1865–1934)/Xu**

**Trio Sonata no. 2 in C minor, BWV 526**

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)**

**I. Vivace**

**II. Largo**

**III. Allegro**

**Joshua fit de battle ob Jericho (1955)**

**Fela Sowande (1905–1987)**

**Choral no. 2 in B minor**

**César Franck (1822–1890)**

**Toccata, from Suite, op. 5**

**Maurice Duruflé (1902–1986)**

# The Finalists cont.

12:45 p.m.

## Aletheia Teague



Aletheia Johanna Teague is a BM at The Juilliard School where she is completing her undergraduate degree in Organ Performance under Mr. Paul Jacobs. A native of Southern CA, Aletheia grew up in a musical family and began piano lessons with her mother at age 5. Several years later, after hearing the Hazel Wright organ performed at the former Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, CA, she was inspired to begin learning the organ. While in CA, Aletheia competed in local AGO Study Grant programs, winning scholarships for four consecutive years. As part of the program, she also took part in masterclasses with organists such as Steven Tharp and Simon Johnson. In 2019, she was a featured performer in the LA AGO President's Day Organ Festival. Aletheia has held several full-time church positions in CA, and from 2019–2020 was organ scholar at Christ (formerly Crystal) Cathedral in Garden Grove, CA. under her former teacher David Ball, director of music and former Juilliard alum. Currently, and in addition to extensive freelance substitute and collaborative work throughout the city, she serves as Assistant Organist at Christ Church on the Upper East Side under Dr Steve Pilkington. Aletheia is the recipient of the Jerome L. Greene Fellowship at the Juilliard School. In her off time, Aletheia enjoys baking, mixing cocktails, playing tennis, and hanging out with friends.

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## Program

**Choral no. 1 in E major**

**César Franck (1822–1890)**

**Trio Sonata No. 5, BWV 529**

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)**

**I. Allegro**

**II. Adagio**

**III. Allegro**

**St Bride, Assisted by Angels (2000)**

**Judith Bingham (b. 1952)**

**Dieu parmi nous, from *La Nativité du Seigneur*, no. 9**

**Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)**



# The Annual David C. Spicer Hymn Playing Competition

1:45 p.m.

Named in honor of the festival's founder, this annual competition celebrates the unique art of hymn playing.

## Preliminary Round

To participate in the hymn playing competition, competitors were invited to submit a recording of the hymn *Nun danket alle Gott* with their preliminary repertoire application.

## Final Round

Finalists for the hymn playing competition are Theodore Cheng and Bruce Xu. Each will perform the hymn *Picardy* as printed at #324 in *The Hymnal 1982*. The audience is encouraged to sing along enthusiastically. Competitors are instructed to creatively introduce the hymn and perform all four stanzas.

## Order of performance

1. Bruce Xu
2. Theodore Cheng

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## Prize

David Spicer Hymn Playing Award: \$2,500

# The Jury

**Alcee Chriss III**



A featured star in the PBS documentary *Pipe Dreams* (2019), Alcee Chriss III is an organist and keyboardist from Fort Worth, TX. Dr. Chriss is the winner of the 2017 Canadian International Organ Competition and the Firmin Swinnen Silver Medal at the 2016 Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition. He has been celebrated for his “grace, skill and abundant proficiency” by the *Journal Assist News*, Albuquerque. And of his most recent solo recording at Montreal Symphony Hall, *Art et Rhapsodie* (2019), the *American Record Guide* wrote that “he plays with clarity, imagination, musicality, virtuosity, and yes, personality.”

Dr. Chriss has performed throughout North America and Europe. Recent and upcoming performances include the International Orgelsommer (Stuttgart, Germany), Stockholm City Hall (Sweden), and as soloist with the Montreal Symphony in a performance of Copland’s *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra*. Other engagements include the Princeton University Chapel, Spreckels Organ Pavilion and International Organ Summer Karlsruhe, Germany. In July 2022 he was a featured performer at the national convention of the American Guild of Organists, held in Seattle WA.

In July 2019, Dr. Chriss was appointed as University Organist and Artist-In-Residence at Wesleyan University, where he teaches courses in organ and keyboard skills. In October 2019, he was awarded his Doctorate of Music degree from McGill University, where he studied with Hans-Ola Ericsson. He previously studied at Oberlin Conservatory of Music where he received his Master’s degree in historical keyboard and a Bachelor’s degree in Organ Performance, studying with Olivier Latry, Marie-Louise Langlais, and James David Christie.

Dr. Chriss is active as a church musician, guest lecturer, and remains engaged with his lifelong love of gospel and jazz music. He also serves on the editorial board of *Vox Humana* magazine.

**Isabelle Demers**



With playing described as having “bracing virtuosity” (*Chicago Classical Review*) and being “fearless and extraordinary” (*Amarillo-Globe News*), Isabelle Demers has enraptured critics, presenters, and audience members around the globe. She has appeared in recital throughout Europe, Oman, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Canada, including at the Cathedrals of Cologne and Regensburg (Germany); the Elbphilharmonie (Hamburg); the Royal Festival Hall, St. Paul’s Cathedral, Westminster Cathedral, and Westminster Abbey (London); City Hall (Stockholm); the Royal Opera House of Muscat (Oman); the Forbidden City Concert Hall (Beijing, China); Victoria Hall (Singapore); Melbourne Town Hall (Australia); Auckland Town Hall (New Zealand); Disney Hall (Los Angeles), Davies Hall (San Francisco), the Meyerson Symphony Center (Dallas), the Kimmel Center, and the Wanamaker Organ at Macy’s (Philadelphia); and the Maison Symphonique (Montréal). Dr. Demers is in continual high demand by her colleagues as witnessed by performances

for numerous regional and national conventions of the American Guild of Organists, the Institute of Organ Builders and International Society of Organbuilders, the Royal Canadian College of Organists, and the Organ Historical Society. She has released multiple CD recordings on the Acis and Pro Organo labels. Her latest CD, recorded at Chicago's Rockefeller Chapel, was released in January 2020, and includes works of Reger, Laurin, Dupré, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, and Macmillan. A native of Québec and a doctoral graduate of the Juilliard School, Dr. Demers is Associate Professor of Organ at McGill University (Montréal, Québec). She was formerly the Joyce Bowden Chair in Organ and Head of the Organ Program at Baylor University (Waco, Texas).

### Thomas Murray



Thomas Murray is University Organist and Professor Emeritus at Yale University, where he served on the faculties of the Yale School of Music and the Institute of Sacred Music for 38 years. At Yale he has taught many of the leading performers of a younger generation. His recordings of Romantic repertoire, both original music for the instrument and transcriptions, are highly acclaimed. High Fidelity magazine credited him with "...consummate skill and artistry in treating the organ as a great orchestra" and American Record Guide said of his Elgar CD: "Murray's performance and his handling of the immense resources of the Woolsey Hall organ are beyond superlatives. The shape of every phrase, the use of every color could not be more perfect."

The American Guild of Organists named him International Artist of the Year for 1986; as recipient of this award he followed such luminaries as Marie-Claire Alain, Jean Guillou and Dame Gillian Weir. He is an honorary Fellow of the RCO (Royal College of Organists in England) and the RCCO (the Royal Canadian College of Organists). In 2005 the Yale School of Music awarded him the Gustave Stoeckel Award for excellence in teaching. An Organ Historical Society member for exactly a half-century last year, he was honored with the OHS Distinguished Service Award in 2010.

He has performed widely in England, Japan, South America and Australia, as well as in most continental European countries and has appeared as soloist with the Pittsburgh, Houston, Milwaukee, New Haven Symphonies, the Moscow Chamber Orchestra and the National Philharmonic in Washington, D.C.







# Austin Organs, Inc.

## Hartford, Connecticut

### Opus 2536 (1971/2013)

Trinity College's organ was built in Hartford and contains 4,416 pipes—the largest are the size of trees and the smallest are the size of pencils.

Clarence Watters (Professor of Music and Trinity College organist from 1932-1969) was consultant for the pipe organ, installed in 1971 by Austin Organs, Inc. of Hartford, Connecticut. Watters described it as "neo-classic," a 20th century organ that employs the best principles of the past three centuries of organ building.

The organ was a gift from Mrs. Newton C. Brainard in memory of her husband, a former mayor of Hartford and a Trustee of the college for 41 years. The instrument stands in the nave with the lowest 12 open wood pipes of the 32 Untersatz sitting directly against the west wall. These pipes were part of the Chapel's original 1932 Æolian-Skinner organ (op. 851), which occupied the now empty chamber in the choir.

The organ's casework and facade layout is the work of designer Charles Nazarian, '73. It was fabricated by artisans in his workshop and installed in 1986. The casework design was adapted to the structure of the existing Austin organ and, while original, was inspired by classical French organ cases. Crowning the case are wood carvings by Morgan Faulds Pike. They include grotesques, unicorns, angels with trumpets and lyres, swallows, griffins, and the Trinity College Bantam mascot. Two panels directly over the console feature the profiles of Paul W. Adams '35 (in whose honor the case was given) and Clarence Watters. Detailed photographs of the carvings and portraits are available on the sculptor's website (linked above).

The powerful Trompette de Jubilé that sits atop the case was installed in 1982, a gift of Alfred M. C. MacColl '54 during the Chapel's Jubilee Year. In 2013, the organ was fitted with new actions and a new console was built and installed by Austin Organs, Inc.

The Chapel also contains two other significant keyboard instruments: the 49-bell Plumb Memorial Carillon by John Taylor and Co., of Loughborough, England, and a five stop mechanical action organ in the Crypt Chapel by Nicholson & Co., of Malvern, England.

More information and a complete stoplist of the Austin organ is available at [www.trincoll.edu/ChapelMusic](http://www.trincoll.edu/ChapelMusic).

#### Curators of the Chapel organs:

Austin Organs, Inc., Hartford, Connecticut  
Messrs. Czelusniak et Dugal, Inc., Northhampton, Massachusetts  
Mr. David Johnston, Curator Emeritus

## About Albert Schweitzer

**ALBERT SCHWEITZER** (1875–1965) was a theologian, organist, philosopher, and physician from the province of Alsace-Lorraine, Germany. The Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival Hartford recognizes Schweitzer for his significant contributions to the organ world as a talented performer and preeminent scholar on the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. He collaborated with one of his organ teachers, Charles-Marie Widor, to edit *The Complete Organ Works of J. S. Bach*, an important edition since its first publication in 1912. Schweitzer’s extensive writings about the music of J. S. Bach continue to be an important resource and inspiration for organists and musicologists.

In 1913, at the age of 38, Schweitzer founded a hospital at Lambaréné in French Equatorial Africa (now Gabon) where he served as a medical missionary for many years. Schweitzer supported this hospital with money he earned from his professional engagements as an organist, lecturer, and preacher across Europe.

While in Africa, he developed his personal philosophy of “Reverence for Life”—that “a man is truly ethical only when he obeys the compulsion to help all life which he is able to assist, and shrinks from injuring anything that lives.” In 1952 he was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize. With the \$33,000 prize money, he added a leprosarium at the hospital in Lambaréné.

## About the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival Hartford

Named for the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, humanitarian, theologian, physician, and organist, the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival USA was founded in 1996 at the Albert Schweitzer Institute, now at Quinnipiac University, by Harold E. Robles (1948–2020), the Institute’s founder, and David C. Spicer (1946–2017), Minister of Music and the Arts at the First Church of Christ in Wethersfield, CT. The inaugural event occurred on September 7, 1997, and the competition began the following year. The festival was modeled after the Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival in Holland that was organized ten times in the Lebuïnuskerk in Deventer from 1978 to 1991.

For the first eighteen years, ASOF USA was sponsored by the First Church of Christ and held in its historic meetinghouse in Wethersfield, CT. In 2015, a nonprofit corporation was formed to move, grow, and expand the festival at Trinity College in Hartford with its distinguished Austin pipe organ. The festival was first held at Trinity College Chapel the following year.

2017 marked the festival’s 20th anniversary, the rebranding of the festival as ASOF Hartford, and the appointment of Vaughn Mauren as Artistic Director. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the festival was canceled in 2020 and a virtual competition was held in 2021. This year marks the festival’s 25th anniversary and the appointment of Christopher Houlihan as Artistic Director. Christopher Houlihan is College Organist & Director of Chapel Music, and Artist-in-Residence at Trinity College.

The mission of ASOF Hartford is to encourage and inspire excellence in organ performance by emerging artists at both the high school and young professional levels. Since moving to Hartford, the festival has grown to become one of the top three competitions for young organists in North America.

**The Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival Hartford is made possible by the generosity of our funders, including:**

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**Competition Venue:**

Trinity College Chapel  
300 Summit Street,  
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