

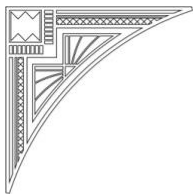


UF PIPE ORGAN CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

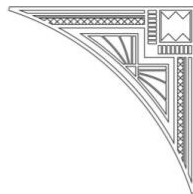
Shawn Thomas
Guest Artist Recital
assisted by the Graduate Brass Quintet

Friday, November 14, 2025
7:20 p.m.
University Auditorium

On this day, November 14th of 2025, the University of Florida Organ Studio is honored to present to the general public two dedicatory plaques for the Dr. Andrew Anderson Memorial Pipe Organ. These brass tablets have been placed on the organ console and in the organ chamber loft in fulfillment of a resolution which was passed in 1925 by the Florida Board of Control. The inscription was originally provided to University of Florida President Albert A. Murphree in a handwritten letter from Dr. Anderson's daughter, Clarissa Anderson, and has been used today to further honor his legacy.



UF PIPE ORGAN
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



**THIS ORGAN WAS PRESENTED BY
DR. ANDREW ANDERSON II of
ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA
DEDICATED JUNE 7TH 1925**



**"FOR GOD IS MUSIC
EVEN AS GOD IS LOVE"**



Program

Festival Fanfare on <i>In dir ist Freude</i>	Brenda Portman (b. 1980)
Prelude and Fugue in G, op. 37 no. 2	Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
Prayer for Peace	Paul Sifler (1911-2001)
Solid Rock Variations	Asriel Davis (b. 1998)
Partita <i>Werde munter, mein Gemüte</i>	Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)
Hózhó	Connor Chee (b. 1987)
Ceremonial Suite	Brenda Portman
I Fanfare	
II Badinerie	
III Song of Peace	
IV Jubilation	

Michelle Klima Thomas, conductor
Harold Villa, trumpet
Emma Cryer, trumpet
Philip Shuler, horn
Corey Burton, trombone
Casey Wood, tuba

Program Notes

Brenda Portman has established a well-respected dual career as both a concert organist and composer. A native of Wisconsin, she is currently Organist at Hyde Park UMC in Cincinnati, and instructor of organ at Xavier University. The text most often translated “In Thee is Gladness” was originally thought to be written by a cousin of Martin Luther. The tune is attributed to Giovanni Gastoldi, an Italian composer who first published the melody in 1591.

The set of three preludes and fugues for organ written by Felix Mendelssohn shows a bridge between the Baroque contrapuntal tradition and Romantic expressivity. Warmth flows from the prelude, in ternary form with a tuneful melody and lush harmonies. The

fugue demonstrates Bach-like discipline in clear entrances of the subject and energetic counterpoint. As history credits Mendelssohn as the catalyst of the Bach Revival, this work exemplifies Mendelssohn's gift for renewing older traditional forms with a fresh harmonic language.

Paul Sifler was a Slovenian-American composer who spent the majority of his career in Southern California and produced a broad catalogue of organ, choral, and chamber works. Though best known for his twelve-tone piece "The Despair and Agony of Dachau," and his jarring setting of The Seven Last Words, both written for solo organ, the Prayer for Peace reveals a more contemplative, reflective style that leans into an "American" sound: consonant harmonies, simple melodies, and chord progressions more commonly associated with jazz.

Asriel Davis is a Maryland-based pianist, organist, educator, and composer whose musical identity intersects sacred, jazz, and classical traditions. He is a recent graduate of Syracuse University. The hymn, "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less" was penned by Baptist minister Edward Mote in 1834. William Bradbury wrote the tune specifically for this text.

The Lutheran evening hymn *Werde munter, mein Gemüte* (Become cheerful, my mind), was most famously used in J.S. Bach's cantata 147, best known by its English title, *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*. Typical of Pachelbel's variation style, the partita moves from the simple chorale to increasingly lively figurations.

Diné pianist and composer Connor Chee is known for combining his classical piano training with his Native American heritage. Chee writes: "This piece was inspired by the traditional Diné (Navajo) concept of *Hózhó*, often translated as 'balance and beauty.' This concept permeates Diné life and culture, and reflects the state of harmony that binds all things together in the universe. In the same way, the Diné seek to achieve harmony and beauty in life each day, despite the inevitable times of imbalance."

Ceremonial Suite was commissioned by Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (Largo, FL) in the summer of 2025 for the Service of Installation of the Rev. Gregory Hoffman and the Rev. Rachel Hoffman. Each movement quotes a hymn tune: Aurelia, Slane, Faithfulness, and Lobe den Herren.

About the Performer

Shawn Thomas is Director of Music & Organist at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, in Largo, Florida. There he oversees a music ministry comprised of the parish singing and ringing choirs, and is the Artistic Director for the Art For Faith's Sake concert series. He is the immediate past Dean of the Clearwater Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Shawn holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Kansas. Graduate and undergraduate work was completed at The University of Florida (Gainesville) and The University of West Florida (Pensacola), respectively. His past teachers include Michael Bauer, Laura Ellis, James Higdon, Lynne Lauderdale, and Kevin Vogt. Shawn has performed in masterclasses with renowned French organists Michel Bouvard, Vincent Dubois, Daniel Roth, and Olivier Latry, and American organists Marie Rubis Bauer, Marilyn Keiser, and Tom Trenney.

Shawn was recently appointed President of the University of Kansas Organ and Church Music Alumni Network. In addition to his work in the Church, Shawn has served

as pianist and vocal coach at St. Petersburg College and as adjudicator for the St. Petersburg Opera Guild High School Vocal Competition. He is married to Michelle, the Cathedral Administrator & Associate for Christian Formation at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter (Episcopal) in St. Petersburg, FL. In his free time, Shawn enjoys chasing after their toddler, Noah, and visiting local craft breweries.

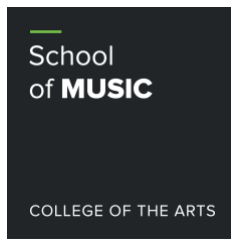
History of the Andrew Anderson Memorial Pipe Organ

A financial gift by Dr. Andrew Anderson, a St. Augustine physician, philanthropist, and associate of early Florida developer Henry Flagler, provided the funds for a pipe organ in the newly constructed University Auditorium. Tonal plans were prepared by William Zeuch of Boston's famous Skinner Organ Company, which built and installed the instrument in early 1925. The organ was first played publicly on June 7th, 1925, at the annual University Commencement Convocation. A musical landmark for its day, the organ was designed and voiced at the zenith of orchestral-imitative or "symphonic" organ design in this country, and is mentioned in such reference works as Orpha Ochse's *The History of the Organ in the United States* and Charles Callahan's *The American Classic Organ*. Claude Murphree, university organist from 1925-1958, performed over 550 concerts on this instrument and his Sunday afternoon recitals became a tradition on campus.

During World War II and immediately after, due to institutional economic conditions, the instrument itself was not given proper care. This University treasure was virtually buried behind layers of heavy velour curtains hung in front of the organ to allow theatrical presentations. When the Division of Music was established in 1948, however, immediate efforts were made to rescue the instrument.

Willis Bodine succeeded Murphree as university organist in 1959 and by the early 1960's the curtains were removed. Under Bodine's leadership, the Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company began a program of mechanical renovation and tonal rehabilitation to repair the damage caused by the ravages of time and neglected maintenance. By 1976, renovation and air-conditioning of the building had been completed, but Aeolian-Skinner was no longer in business. In 1992 the M.P. Möller Organ Company continued the careful work of restoring the organ to its former excellence as a teaching and recital instrument.

Laura Ellis joined the UF faculty in 2003 to become the third university organist in the history of the institution. In the fall of 2014, the Reuter Organ Company located in Lawrence, KS, was contracted to provide tonal renovations to the instrument. Twenty-four new ranks of principal pipes were built to revise and enhance the Great, Swell, Positiv and Choir choruses. Reed pipes in all divisions were rebuilt or replaced. Other stops were re-scaled and wind pressures were adjusted. Finally, the entire instrument was re-voiced to achieve a new tonal balance, characterized by abundant fundamental tone and greater clarity. The newly renovated organ was heard for the first time during the *Phantom of the Opera*, presented by the College of the Arts in January 2015.



To ensure an enjoyable concert experience for all, please refrain from talking and entering or exiting while musicians are performing. Food and drink are prohibited in all concert halls. Please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices. Thank you for your cooperation.

Program 049 in the School of Music Events Series of the 2025-2026 academic year.

The College of the Arts School of Music at the University of Florida is an internationally recognized community of performers, scholars, and producers of the arts that offers baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees.

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For general questions about the School of Music, please contact:

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