



# CHRISTMAS ORGAN RECITAL

Thomas M. Sheehan & Rebecca Ehren

DECEMBER 25, 2022 • 1:30 PM

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*A Christmas Fantasy* (2013)

Jonathan Scott  
(b. 1978)

*Noël « Étranger » sur les jeux d'anches* (ca. 1757)

Louis-Claude Daquin  
(1694–1772)

Variations on “Tempus adest floridum” (2022) (*World premiere*)

Karl Osterland  
(b. 1956)

*Parade of the Wooden Soldiers* (1897)

Leon Jessel  
(1871–1942)

*Carol Rhapsody* (1941)

Richard Purvis  
(1913–1994)

*A free will offering will be collected to support the organ program at the Cathedral.*

Variations on “From Heaven Above” (1986)

Walter Pelz  
(b. 1926)

*Sleigh Ride* (1946–48)

Leroy Anderson  
(1908–1975)

“Hallelujah” from *Messiah*, HWV 56 (1741)

George Frideric Handel  
(1685–1759)

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**Thomas Sheehan** is the Organist and Associate Director of Music at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, where he is responsible for the organ program at the Cathedral. In this position, he has played for several high-profile civic events, including the virtual service celebrating the inauguration of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris and the funerals of Colin Powell, Bob Dole, and Madeleine Albright. Prior to this position, he served on the music staffs of the Memorial Church, Harvard University; Saint Mark's Church in Philadelphia, PA; and Trinity Episcopal Church in Princeton, NJ. Tom is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, where he received diplomas in organ and harpsichord, studying with Alan Morrison and Leon Schelhase. He received both the Master of Music and Bachelor of Music degrees from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ, as a student of Ken Cowan. He is currently a doctoral candidate in organ at Boston University as a student of Peter Sykes.

**Rebecca Ehren** recently began as Organ Scholar at Washington National Cathedral, where she plays for services, concerts, and events; works with the choristers and professional choir; and leads organ demonstrations as part of the Midday Music series. Prior to her role at the Cathedral, she held positions at Grace Episcopal Church (NYC), St. Michael's Episcopal Church (NYC), and the University Church in Yale. Originally from Ottawa, Canada, Rebecca received a bachelor's degree in piano from Indiana University and a master's degree in organ from the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. In addition to playing keyboard instruments, she regularly sings in professional ensembles and performed with the Experiential Orchestra and Chorus for their Grammy-winning recording of Ethyl Smyth's *The Prison*. Beyond performing, Rebecca has served as Chair of the Board of Directors for C4: The Choral Composer Conductor Collective and holds a second undergraduate degree from Indiana University in cognitive science and mathematics/economics.

# From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

## Theme—Moderato

From heav'n above to earth I come  
To bring good news to ev'ry one!  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To all the world, and gladly sing:

## Variation I—Cantabile (Canon at the Octave)

To you this night is born a child  
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;  
This newborn child of lowly birth  
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

## Variation II—Lento (Canon at the Fifth)

For velvets soft and silken stuff  
You have but hay and straw so rough  
On which as king so rich and great  
To be enthroned in humble state.

## Variation III—Espressivo, quasi chant style

The blessing which the Father planned  
The Son holds in his infant hand,  
That in his kingdom, bright and fair,  
You may with us his glory share.

## Variation IV—Vivace

My heart for very joy now leaps;  
My voice no longer silence keeps;  
I too must join the angel-throng  
To sing with joy his cradle-song:

## Variation V—Tempo lugubrioso

This is the Christ, God's Son most high,  
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;  
He will himself your Savior be  
And from all sin will set you free.

## Variation VI—Briskly

How glad we'll be to find it so!  
Then with the shepherds let us go  
To see what God for us has done  
In sending us his own dear Son.

## Variation VII—Tranquil

Were earth a thousand times as fair  
And set with gold and jewels rare,  
Still such a cradle would not do  
To rock a prince so great as you.

## Variation VIII—Lento

O dearest Jesus, holy child,  
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled.  
A holy shrine, within my heart,  
That you and I need never part.

## Variation IX—Lively, non-legato—Presto—Broad and free (Fugato/Finale)

"Glory to God in highest heav'n  
Who unto us his Son has giv'n."  
With angels sing in pious mirth:  
A glad new year to all the earth!

*(Martin Luther, 1483–1546; English translation 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship)*