

KATELYN EMERSON Biography

Organist, lecturer, and pedagogue Katelyn Emerson, hailed as “one of the world’s most promising organists” (*Listvinafélag Hallgrímskirkju*, Iceland), is internationally renowned for performances throughout North America, Europe, and Asia that are “thrilling from beginning to end” and that showcase repertoire from the 14th—21st centuries with “impressive technical facility and musicianship” (*Cleveland Classical*). Upcoming and past recital venues include Walt Disney Hall (Los Angeles, California), Hallgrímskirja (Reykjavik, Iceland), Krasnoyarsk Philharmonic Hall (Russia), Cathédrale Saint-Omer (France), Kurhaus Wiesbaden (Germany), Auditorio Nacional de Música (Madrid, Spain), Cathédrale St-Quentin (Hasselt, Belgium), Hauptkirche St. Petri (Hamburg, Germany), Västerås Cathedral (Sweden), Longwood Gardens (Pennsylvania), Musashino Civic Cultural Hall (Japan), Cadet Chapel (West Point, New York), Benaroya Hall (Seattle, Washington), and Merrill Auditorium (Portland, Maine), among others, as well as inauguration performances at churches that include St. Thomas Church Fifth Avenue and Trinity Wall Street (both New York, New York).

Prizewinner of competitions on three continents, Katelyn garners acclaim from audiences ranging from those new to classical music to organ aficionados for her “beautifully designed program[s]” (*Orgue Canada*), “refreshingly original and interesting” program notes (*The Diapason*), and “careful ear and sense of musicality that puts her at the top of recitalists performing today” (*Journal of American Organbuilding*). As first prizewinner of the American Guild of Organists’ (AGO) 2016 National Young Artists' Competition in Organ Performance (Houston, Texas), the Guild’s premier performance competition, Katelyn performed at the 2018 National Convention of the AGO in Kansas City (Missouri) after giving over 70 concerts

throughout the United States and Europe in the intervening two years. She was awarded the Second Jean Boyer Award in the 2014 Fifth International Organ Competition “Pierre de Manchicourt” (Béthune and Saint-Omer, France), second prize of the 2015 Arthur Poister Scholarship Competition (Syracuse, New York), first prize of the 2011 Region V AGO/Quimby Regional Competition for Young Organists (Lexington, Kentucky), third prize of the VIII Musashino International Organ Competition (Tokyo, Japan), and, as the youngest finalist of the VIII Mikael Tariverdiev International Organ Competition (Kaliningrad, Russia), the title of “Laureate” and Third Place, as well as additional recital prizes. Katelyn was selected as part of the inaugural “20 under 30” class of 2015 for *The Diapason* magazine, which “recognizes young talents in the fields of organ and harpsichord performance, organ and harpsichord building, carillon, and church music” who show “superior accomplishments, leadership, creativity, and innovative thinking.” Katelyn’s two CD recordings appear on the *Pro Organo* label: *Evocations* (2017), featuring the historic 1936 Aeolian-Skinner organ at the Church of the Advent (Boston, Massachusetts) and *Inspirations* (2018), sponsored by the Andover Organ Company in honor of their 70th anniversary and recorded on their Op. 114 at Christ Lutheran Church (Baltimore, Maryland). Her interviews and performances are regularly heard on such radio programs as *Radio Russia*, American Public Media’s *Pipedreams*, WXXI-FM’s *With Heart and Voice*, Radio VM’s *Récit au grand orgue*, Québec, Canada, and *Radio Présence*, Toulouse, France.

Between travels for performances, Katelyn is based in both the USA and the UK, having been awarded a 1+3 Studentship from the Economic and Social Research Council Doctoral Training Partnership (ESRC DTP) and a Bursary from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to support her PhD research at the University of Cambridge’s Centre for Music and Science. Katelyn holds a Master of Arts in organ from the *Musikhochschule für Musik und*

Darstellende Kunst (Stuttgart, Germany), where she was supported by a German Academic Exchange Scholarship (DAAD), and, as recipient of the prestigious J. William Fulbright Study/Research Grant, Katelyn studied organ *en perfectionnement* at the *Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Toulouse* (France) with Michel Bouvard and Jan Willem Jansen. She holds double bachelor's degrees in organ performance and French as well as minors in music history and historical performance (fortepiano) from Oberlin College and Conservatory (Ohio). During her time at Oberlin, she taught music theory at the Oberlin Community Music School, received the Selby Harlan Houston prize for distinguished work in organ and music theory, and was inducted into Pi Kappa Lambda, the national music honors society. Other scholarships to support her musical and academic work have included the 2015 McClelland Community Music Foundation Scholarship, the 2013 M. Louise Miller Scholarship, and a 2005 Young Organist Collaborative scholarship, which funded her first year of organ study (Portsmouth, New Hampshire). Her teachers have included Ludger Lohmann, Olivier Latry, Hans-Ola Ericsson, James David Christie, Marie-Louise Langlais, Ray Cornils, and Abbey Hallberg-Siegfried. She has studied organ improvisation with Jeffrey Brillhart, Marie-Louise Langlais, and Bálint Karosi, piano with Arlene Kies, fortepiano with David Breitman, both harpsichord and continuo with Webb Wiggins, flute with Trisha Craig, and voice with Ellen Hargis.

In addition to teaching privately, Katelyn has served on the faculty of the St. Andrews Organ Academy (Scotland, UK), the McGill Student Organ Academy (Montréal, Canada), the Oberlin Summer Organ Academy (Ohio, USA), and numerous AGO-sponsored Pipe Organ Encounters. She is frequently invited to join juries for national and international organ interpretation and church music competitions and scholarships. Having received a Certificate in Advanced Occupational Ergonomics from Colorado State University, she regularly presents

masterclasses and lectures on healthy practice techniques, organ interpretation, and sacred music for AGO-sponsored events and at universities in the USA and UK.

Katelyn has previously held the posts of Associate Organist & Choirmaster at the Church of the Advent (Boston, Massachusetts), where she worked with the professional Choir of the Church of the Advent, the volunteer Parish Choir, and the historic Aeolian-Skinner organ, music director of St. Paul Lutheran Church (Amherst, Ohio), and Oberlin Sacred Music Intern at the Brick Presbyterian Church (New York, New York). She is associate editor of the online editorial journal *Vox Humana* (voxhumanajournal.com) and often contributes feature articles for the UK's *Choir & Organ* magazine. In addition to volunteering with charity organizations such as Scotland's *Sowne of Organe* to increase public awareness of the cultural and technological significance of extant historic organs, Katelyn serves on the Membership Committee of the Organ Historical Society and as a board member of the European Chapter of the AGO. She has previously served on the Executive Committee of the Boston Chapter of the AGO and holds professional memberships in the Association of Anglican Musicians and the American Musicological Society.

For more information, please visit www.katelynemerson.com, or send an email to katelyn.emerson@gmail.com.

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