

KATELYN EMERSON

Biography

Organist, scholar, and pedagogue Katelyn Emerson, “a star of the first rank, and an ambassador for the organ” (*Orgue Canada*), is hailed as “the perfect interpreter” (*Glasgow Times*) and “one of her generation’s most prominent organists” (*Portland Press Herald*). Her programs of repertoire from the 14th century to the present day are “a perfect match for the organ and venue” (*The American Organist*) and “show the organ in all the magnificence of which it is capable” (*RITMO*). Her concert career spans the globe, taking her to concert halls, cathedrals, and churches on both sides of the Atlantic and beyond with recent and upcoming performances at *Cathédrale Notre-Dame* (Paris), Walt Disney Concert Hall (Los Angeles), *Auditorio Nacional de Música* (Madrid), *Musiikkitalo* (Helsinki), *Hallgrímskirkja* (Reykjavík), Krasnoyarsk Philharmonic Hall (Russia), *Kurhaus Wiesbaden* (Germany), Musashino Civic Cultural Hall (Tokyo), Benaroya Hall (Seattle), Riverside Church (New York), Merrill Auditorium (Portland, Maine), St James Church (Sydney), and further cathedrals and basilicas in Geneva, Graz, Brisbane, Hasselt, Montserrat, Düsseldorf, Västerås, San Francisco, and Copenhagen, among others. She has given inaugural recitals for new instruments in the USA and England, recently including Brasenose College (Oxford) and First Lutheran Church (Lorain, OH).

Prizewinner of competitions on three continents, Katelyn was awarded first prize in the American Guild of Organists’ (AGO) 2016 National Young Artists’ Competition in Organ Performance (Houston), appearing as recitalist at the 2018 AGO National Convention in Kansas City after more than seventy invited recitals in the United States and Europe in the two intervening years. Further awards include the Second Jean Boyer Award at the 2014 International Organ Competition ‘Pierre de Manchicourt’ (Béthune and Saint-Omer), second prize in the 2015 Arthur Poister Scholarship Competition, third prize at the VIII Musashino International Organ Competition (Tokyo), and Laureate, Third Place, and recital prizes as the youngest finalist in the VIII Mikael Tariverdiev International Organ Competition (Kaliningrad). She is also a member of *The Diapason*’s inaugural “20 under 30” class of 2015, recognizing “superior accomplishments, leadership, creativity, and innovative thinking.”

Katelyn’s recordings *Evocations* (2017), on the historic 1936 Aeolian-Skinner at the Church of the Advent, Boston, and *Inspirations* (2018), sponsored by the Andover Organ Company for its seventieth

anniversary, appear on the Pro Organo label. Both have been enthusiastically received by the press, with Katelyn's playing in *Evocations* called "masterful in execution, in turns majestic in its musical power and deeply moving," and the recording "a must [...] for organ aficionados" (Fanfare). *The American Organist* wrote that *Inspirations* is "a wonderful study in programming, interpretation, and registration" in which "artist, instrument, repertoire, and production come together in one 76-minute-long triumph." Her interviews and performances have been broadcast on American Public Media's *Pipedreams*, WXXI's *With Heart and Voice*, *Radio Russia*, Radio VM's *Récit au grand orgue* (Québec), and *Radio Présence* (Toulouse).

Between travels for performances, Katelyn is based in the United States and the United Kingdom as a PhD candidate at the University of Cambridge's Centre for Music and Science, funded by an ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership 1+3 studentship and a UKRI bursary. Her research on the intersections between musicians' interpretations, backgrounds, and instruments stems directly for her pedagogy and performance. She holds an MPhil in Music from Cambridge, a Master of Arts in organ from the *Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Stuttgart*, supported by a German Academic Exchange Scholarship (DAAD), and, as a J. William Fulbright Study/Research grantee, studied *en perfectionnement* at the *Conservatoire à rayonnement régional de Toulouse* with Michel Bouvard and Jan Willem Jansen. Her double bachelor's degrees in organ performance and French, with minors in music history and historical performance (fortepiano), are from Oberlin College & Conservatory. While at Oberlin, she tutored music theory, received the Selby Harlan Houston Prize for work in organ and music theory, and was inducted into Pi Kappa Lambda, the national music honors society. Further support has included a 2026 Royal College of Organists United Grand Lodge of England bursary, the 2015 McClelland Community Music Foundation Scholarship, and the 2013 M. Louise Miller Scholarship. Her teachers have included Ludger Lohmann, Olivier Latry, Hans-Ola Ericsson, James David Christie, Marie-Louise Langlais, Ray Cornils, and Abbey Hallberg-Siegfried.

Equally sought-after for her teaching as for her playing, Katelyn teaches privately, coaches players for international competitions and diplomas, and is a regular faculty member at academies that have included St Andrews University Organ Week (Scotland), the McGill Student Organ Academy (Canada), the Oberlin Summer Organ Academy, and more than a dozen AGO Pipe Organ Encounters. At Cambridge, she has supervised

undergraduates in music psychology and performance studies and coordinates educational events and lessons for the University-wide Organ Scholars Forum. A Certificate in Advanced Occupational Ergonomics from Colorado State University underpins key aspects of her pedagogy, and she has been invited to give dozens of classes on healthy practice techniques, performance-impacting injury prevention and recovery, interpretation, and sacred music in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Katelyn receives frequent invitations to adjudicate international playing competitions, most recently the 2027 Canadian International Organ Competition (preliminary round), the 2027 Miami International Organ Competition (USA), the 2026 Sydney Organ Competition (Australia), the 2025 *Concours international pour orgue de Saint-Maurice* (Switzerland), and the 2024 IAO–RCO Organ Playing Competition (UK).

Katelyn was previously Associate Organist & Choirmaster at the Church of the Advent, Boston, Music Director of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Amherst, Ohio, and Oberlin Sacred Music Intern at Brick Presbyterian Church, New York. 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 Webmaster of the European Chapter of the AGO.

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Feel free to contact Katelyn directly to request a biography of any other length for publicity or concert programs.