

# BYRD CELEBRATION

FALL 2023



Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church  
presents a celebration in honor of the  
400th anniversary of the death of

WILLIAM BYRD  
(c. 1540–1623)

Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church  
West 87th Street at West End Avenue, New York City  
The Rev'd Dr Andrew C. Blume, Rector

# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**Friday, September 8 at 7:00 PM**

**Res Facta** *Ryan James Brandau, director*

**BYRD @ 400: THE CHORAL WORKS**

Res Facta is a project-based vocal ensemble led by Ryan James Brandau comprised of thirteen of New York and Chicago's finest consort singers. The program offers a rich and diverse survey of William Byrd's body of work for choral ensemble. It combines motets, anthems, mass movements, and songs curated from volumes published across five decades highlighting the breadth and impact of Byrd's consummate skill. At the core of the program stands a selection of Byrd's large-scale motets from the 1589 and 1591 *Cantiones Sacrae* collections. Exquisitely crafted, they present us the composer at the height of his expressive and rhetorical power from the aching poignancy of *Ne Irascaris, Domine* and *Tribulationes Civitatum*, to the pathos of *Miserere Mei* and jubilation of *Haec Dies*. Their intensity juxtaposes the buoyant joy of English anthems *Sing We Merrily* and *Blow Up the Trumpet*, the tender intimacy of movements from the *Mass for Four Voices* and *Mass for Five Voices*, and the cheeky pithiness of miniatures from the 1588 and 1611 song collections. Join us for a moving, beautiful experience celebrating one of the greatest contributors to the choral repertoire.

Tickets: \$50, \$30 [www.gemsny.org/events/resfacta](http://www.gemsny.org/events/resfacta)

**Saturday, September 9 at 2:00 PM**

**Elm City Consort** *Michael Rigsby, director*

**The New Consort** *Brian Mummert, director*

**TO ORNAMENT THINGS DIVINE:**

**SACRED AND DEVOTIONAL MUSIC OF WILLIAM BYRD**

The New Haven-based Elm City Consort will collaborate with the vocal ensemble, The New Consort, in a program of music by William Byrd, whose 400th death anniversary we observe this year. This program continues the Elm City Consort's tradition of performing Renaissance masterpieces with combinations of voices and viols. The upcoming concert is built around the *Mass for Three Voices* (c.1592) with additional works in English and Latin from all of Byrd's major collections as well as pieces for viol consort. The Elm City Consort has performed wide-ranging programs of music from the 14th-18th centuries for New Haven audiences for over 15 years. The New Consort is a project-based vocal ensemble directed by baritone Brian Mummert. The New Consort is based in New York City and performs a wide repertoire including early music and newly commissioned works for vocal ensemble.

Admission: \$25 suggested donation, as able

*Available at the door on the day of the concert*

**Sunday, September 10 at 1:30 PM**

*Gwendolyn Toth, speaker*

**BYRD CELEBRATION OPENING LECTURE**

The Telegraph of London writes “Four-hundred years since William Byrd’s death, we should be shouting his name from the rooftops.” Yet even though William Byrd is one of the most famous English composers, much remains an enigma about the man and his music. Gwendolyn Toth, music director of Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church as well as the coordinator for the Byrd Celebration, presents a 45-minute lecture on the life and music of William Byrd.

Admission: Free

**Sunday, October 1 at 4:00 PM**

*Elizabeth Weaver, soprano & Charles Weaver, lute*

**PRIVATE MUSIC FOR RECUSANT CATHOLICS:**

**SONGS AND MOTETS OF WILLIAM BYRD**

One of the greatest champions of William Byrd’s music in his own day was his friend Edward Paston, a member of the landed gentry of Norfolk, England. Byrd and Paston both adhered to the Roman Catholic faith, which was illegal in England at that time. Paston’s remarkable private music collection includes both secular and sacred music, even large-scale choral music, preserved in intabulations for a single voice and lute, intended for entertainment and devotion, or possibly even for Masses celebrated in secret by itinerant Jesuits. Hear this unusual repertoire performed by longtime duo partners Elizabeth and Charles Weaver. Elizabeth Weaver is a soprano acclaimed for her “angelic brightness and dedication” and the “remarkable clarity” of her declamation. Charles Weaver is a sought-after performer on early plucked instruments. He is on faculty at the Juilliard School and holds a PhD in Music Theory from the City University of New York.

Admission: \$25 suggested donation

*Available at the door on the day of the concert.*

**Saturday, October 21 at 8:00 PM**

*Pomerium Alexander Blachly, director*

**SONGS, HYMNS, AND PSALMS BY WILLIAM BYRD**

Byrd’s choral music reveals a series of compositional phases, though not ones as differentiated as those we associate with Du Fay or Stravinsky. Many of his early sacred works are based on Gregorian chant. As a young composer Byrd also liked to display his technical prowess in challenging canons such as we hear in the third stanza of the hymn *O lux beata Trinitas*. Byrd’s middle and late periods both focus on extending phrases through contrapuntal skill, and both contain many somber, contemplative works. Byrd’s music in the two volumes of *Gradualia* (1605 and 1607) reveal his late style. Here, he focuses on the beauty of pure, serene coun-

terpoint, with motives that emphasize the declamation of specific words or phrases, which he then skillfully weaves into a fabric of asymmetrical imitative polyphony. Pomerium's program traces Byrd's compositional trajectory, including works from all but one of his self-published printed collections in chronological order, plus two works that survive only in manuscript copies.

Tickets: \$30 (\$20 seniors, \$5 students) [www.gemsny.org/events/pomerium](http://www.gemsny.org/events/pomerium)

**Saturday, October 28 at 7:00 PM**

**Sunday, October 29 at 4:00 PM**

**ARTEK** *Gwendolyn Toth, director*

### **BYRD 1589: SONGS OF SUNDRIE NATURES I**

As its name suggests, Byrd's 1589 volume of songs varies widely in scoring, style, and mood. Byrd's preface says that he is "desirous to delight thee with varietie, whereof (in my opinion) no Science is more plentifully adorned then Musicke," and he offers the book as a musical compilation "to serve for all companies and voyces," signing himself "The most affectionate freend to all that love or learne Musick." ARTEK singers Laura Heimes, soprano; Eric Brenner, countertenor; Richard Pittsinger, tenor; Andrew Fuchs, tenor; Elijah Blaisdell, baritone; and Peter Becker, bass perform a selection of both sacred and secular masterpieces for 3, 4, 5 and 6 voices with keyboard and lute accompaniment, including the 7 *Penitential Songs* and the beautiful part-song *If In Thine Heart*.

Tickets: \$50, \$25, \$15 [www.gemsny.org/events/artek](http://www.gemsny.org/events/artek)

**Friday, November 3 at 7:00 PM**

*Rebecca Pechefsky, virginal and muselar*

### **WILL YOU WALK THE WOODS SO WILD:**

### **BYRD'S KEYBOARD FANTASIES, SONGS, AND DANCES**

Rebecca Pechefsky will perform some of William Byrd's most popular fantasies, dances, and keyboard variations, including *Will You Walk the Woods So Wild*, the *Pavana Bray*, and his monumental *Fantasia* from the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (FVB 52), as well as some that are performed less often, such as the *Gypsie's Round*. She will play two different instruments: an Italian virginal after Pisarense and a Flemish muselar after Ruckers, both built in Brooklyn by Garrick Dolberg. Well known in the New York area, Rebecca Pechefsky has performed in such venues as Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall, and the Morris-Jumel Mansion, where she and Brooklyn Baroque have performed in a yearly series. Tickets: \$20 (\$15 students and seniors)

*Available at the door on the day of the concert.*

**Saturday, November 4 at 7:30 PM**

**The Western Wind Vocal Ensemble**

*Linda Lee Jones & Christina Kay, sopranos; Eric S. Brenner, countertenor; Bradley King & David Vanderwal, tenors; Paul Greene-Dennis, bass*

**MAKE ME TO KNOW THY WAYS:**

**A RECUSANT CATHOLIC IN A PROTESTANT COURT**

William Byrd navigated the tricky and precarious divide between his devout Catholic faith and the Anglican reform embraced by the court of Henry the VIII and his daughter Elizabeth I. As a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal and a favorite of Queen Elizabeth, Byrd produced prodigiously in English for the Anglican rite and privately, in Latin, for the traditional Catholic rite. All the while he produced *Songs of Sundrie Natures*, a large body of partsongs in English about love and courtship, village and country life, and religious devotion. Since 1969, the internationally acclaimed vocal sextet The Western Wind has devoted itself to the special beauty and variety of *a cappella* music. The Ensemble's repertoire reveals its diverse background – from Renaissance motets to Fifties rock 'n' roll, from medieval carols to Duke Ellington, from complex works by avant-garde composers to the simplest folk melodies.

Tickets: \$50, \$35 (\$20 students and seniors) [www.westernwind.org](http://www.westernwind.org)

**Sunday, November 5 at 10:30 AM**

**Choir of Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church**

*Gwendolyn Toth, music director*

**FEAST OF ALL SAINTS**

In honor of the Byrd Celebration, the Church's regular Sunday morning worship on November 5 will include Byrd's complete *Mass for Five Voices* and the All Saints propers as set by Byrd in the *Gradualia I*, 1605: *Gaudeamus omnes in Domino; Timete Dominum; Venite ad me; Justorum animae; and Beati mundo corde*. The Choir of Saint Ignatius of Antioch: Audrey Fernandez-Fraser, soprano; Emily Addis, soprano; Richard Pitt-singer, tenor; Bennett Mahler, tenor; Peter Becker, bass.

Admission: Free

**Saturday, November 11 at 7:00 PM**

**Sunday, November 12 at 4:00 PM**

**ARTEK** *Gwendolyn Toth, director*

**BYRD 1589: SONGS OF SUNDRIE NATURES II**

As its name suggests, Byrd's 1589 volume of songs varies widely in scoring, style, and mood. Byrd's preface says that he is "desirous to delight thee with varietie, whereof (in my opinion) no Science is more plentifully adorned then Musicke," and he offers the book as a musical compilation "to serve for all companies and voyces," signing himself "The most affectionate freend to all that love or learne Musick." ARTEK singers Sarah

Chalfy, soprano; Kim Leeds, mezzo-soprano; Richard Pittsinger, tenor; Andrew Fuchs, tenor; Elijah Blaisdell, baritone; and Peter Becker, bass perform a selection of both sacred and secular masterpieces for 3, 4, 5 and 6 voices with keyboard and lute accompaniment including the part-song *I thought that Love had been a boy* and the anthem *Unto the Hills Mine Eyes I Lift*, a setting of Psalm 121.

Tickets: \$50, \$25, \$15 [www.gemsny.org/events/artek](http://www.gemsny.org/events/artek)

**Friday, November 18 at 7:30 PM; pre-concert lecture at 6:30 PM**

**Polyhymnia** *John Bradley, director*

**INEXTINGUISHABLE LIGHT:**

**A 400TH YEAR'S MIND FOR WILLIAM BYRD & THOMAS WEEBKES**

Join Polyhymnia to celebrate two very different English composers who died in 1623. William Byrd, a devout Catholic, who lived into his 80s, and Thomas Weelkes, a Protestant libertine and a generation younger, died at 47. Both composed music for Elizabeth I and James I, but while Weelkes was firmly planted in English language cathedral repertoire, William Byrd composed music for clandestine Catholic celebrations of the Roman Mass at the country houses of Catholic nobility while at the same time placating Elizabeth I as a gentleman of the Chapel Royal. Polyhymnia will sing a major work by both composers, the *Mass for Four Voices* by Byrd and the grand *Ninth Service* of Weelkes, as well as motets and English anthems by both composers.

Tickets: \$30 (\$20 students and seniors) [www.polyhymnia-nyc.org](http://www.polyhymnia-nyc.org)

**Friday, December 1 at 7:30 PM**

**Abendmusik** *Patricia Ann Neely, director*

**A FATHER OF MUSICK**

Abendmusik, New York's Early Music String Band, showcases the rarely-performed repertoire of the late 16th and 17th centuries composed for string consort. In honor of William Byrd, on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of his death, Abendmusik presents his most treasured compositions for viol consort: fantasies, *In Nomines*, dances, and arrangements of vocal works and keyboard pieces from the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* and *My Lady Nevell's Book*. Patricia Ann Neely, director and treble viol; Rosamund Morley, treble viol; Lawrence Lipnik, tenor viol; Dan McCarthy, tenor viol; Arnie Tanimoto, bass viol; and John Mark Rozendaal, bass viol.

Tickets: \$25 (\$10 students and seniors)

[www.gemsny.org/events/abendmusik](http://www.gemsny.org/events/abendmusik)

Friday, December 15 at 7:00 PM

**ARTEK Candlelight Concert**

*Gwendolyn Toth and Dongsok Shin, Keyboards*

**BYRD, BATTLES AND BELLS**

Partners in life and in music, Gwendolyn Toth and Dongsok Shin perform music from the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* and *My Lady Nevell's Book*. Music includes artful arrangements for two keyboards of *The Battell* and *The Bells* as well as pieces for solo keyboard. The concert will be performed on two chamber organs, harpsichord, muselar, and virginals, all in a candlelight setting in the beautiful sanctuary of Saint Ignatius of Antioch Church. A triumph of nimble fingers – and tuning!

Tickets: \$50, \$25, \$15 [www.gemsny.org/events/artek](http://www.gemsny.org/events/artek)

Sunday December 17 at 5 PM

**Choir of Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church**

*Gwendolyn Toth, music director*

**CHORAL EVENSONG**

To close the Byrd Celebration, Saint Ignatius of Antioch Church will celebrate Choral Evensong with plainchant, hymns and settings from Byrd's masterpiece of Anglican church music, *The Great Service*, including the monumental 10-part *Magnificat*. The Saint Ignatius of Antioch Choir and guests will sing the candlelight service.

Admission: Free

All events take place at Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church  
Enter on West 87th Street between Broadway and West End Avenue  
New York, NY 10024

*About the Byrd Celebration*

Saint Ignatius of Antioch Episcopal Church has a long history of excellence in music. Under the direction of Gwendolyn Toth, the outstanding professional choir sings Gregorian chant, mass settings, motets, and anthems each week drawn from the glories of Medieval and Renaissance music, employing cutting-edge early music performance practices. The acoustics of Saint Ignatius rank among the finest acoustics in New York City for the performance of early music, especially vocal music. The Byrd Celebration invites early music ensembles to give concerts focused on William Byrd, one of the outstanding English composers of both sacred and secular music; the *Cheque Book* of the Chapel Royal noted on the day of Byrd's passing, July 4, 1623, the death of "a Father of Musick." The fourteen events include a wide selection of Byrd's sacred and secular music, including full performances of his three late masses for 3, 4, and 5 voices.

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# THE CHURCH OF SAINT IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

552 WEST END AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10024

ON THE WEB: [www.saintignatiusnyc.org](http://www.saintignatiusnyc.org)

EMAIL: [office@saintignatiusnyc.org](mailto:office@saintignatiusnyc.org)

OFFICE HOURS: BY APPOINTMENT

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The Rev'd Dr Andrew C. Blume *Rector*

The Rev'd Dr Philip H. Towner *Associate Rector*

The Rev'd Paul S. Kahn *Deacon*

The Rev'd John Miles Evans *Honorary Associate*

Dr Gwendolyn Toth *Organist & Choirmaster*

Mr Eddie Zheng *Assistant Organist*

Ms Juliet Nawita *Sexton*

Ms Holly Hughes *Churchwarden*

Dr Hope Burnam Lampert *Churchwarden*

Mr William L. Farris *Treasurer*

Ms Helen Jarvis *Clerk*

Mr William L. Farris      Dr Dhananjay Jagannathan

Ms Helen Jarvis                      Mr Clive McKeef

Mr Anthony J. Mickey              Ms Susan Moran

Ms Meredith L. Strauss              Mr Paul Willcott

Dr Warren T. Woodfin

*Vestry*

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