



LONGWOOD
GARDENS

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Sebastian Heindl wins Longwood Gardens Organ Competition 2019

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Sebastian Heindl, 21, of Gera, Germany, is the winner of the 2019 Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition, garnering the \$40,000 Pierre S. du Pont First Prize. In addition, Heindl receives a contract with Phillip Truckenbrod Concert Artists, and a 2019-20 performance at Longwood Gardens.

"The Longwood Gardens Organ Competition is truly unique and inspiring. I have never been in a competition like it," Heindl said. "It is all about creativity and pure musical beauty . . . [The competition is] a big challenge I would recommend to every young organist to accept."

"The famed Aeolian organ inspired a remarkable level of musical creativity from the contestants in the 2019 Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition," said Head Judge Todd Wilson. "This year's prize winners have the potential to be major influences on the art of organ playing in the 21st century."

The Firmin Swinnen \$15,000 Second Prize was awarded to Bryan Anderson, 26, of Stockbridge, GA. Colin MacKnight, 25, of Morristown, NJ won the Clarence Snyder \$5,000 Third Prize. In addition to the top prize, Heindl also garnered the \$1,000 Audience Choice Prize and the AGO Philadelphia Chapter Prize of \$1,000 recognizing outstanding performance of the judges' choice piece, *To Longwood Gardens* by Samuel Barber (1910-81).



Winners of the 2019 Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition, from left: Sebastian Heindl, 21, (Germany) won the \$40,000 Pierre S. du Pont First Prize; Bryan Anderson, 26, (US) won the \$15,000 Firmin Swinnen Second Prize; and Colin MacKnight, 25, (US) won the Clarence Snyder \$5,000 Third Prize.

The Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition began in 2013 and is held every three years. It is designed to recognize young talents and is open to contestants ages 18 to 30. Ten musicians are selected from around the world to compete on The Longwood Organ, the largest residential organ in the world with 10,010 pipes, 146 ranks, and a grand console. This kingly instrument is challenging, but these talented organists performed varying and demanding repertoire. A video of the final round performances is available at

<https://longwoodgardens.org/international-organ-competition/2019-competition>.

The panel of expert judges include Peter Richard Conte, Grand Court Organist of the renowned Wanamaker Organ and Principal Organist at Longwood Gardens; Dr. Marnie Giesbrecht, Professor Emerita and University Organist at the University of Alberta and Adjunct Professor of Music at The King's University, Edmonton as well as organ soloist and performer with Joachim Segger as Duo Majoya; Maggie Hamilton, Editor of *Choir & Organ* magazine and organist, choir director, and founder-director of Counterpoint, a world music partner project of Christian Aid; Thomas Heywood, the only professional concert organist in Australian history, and one of the world's finest concert organists; Rossen Milanov, Music Director of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra and Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, Princeton Symphony Orchestra, and the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias in Spain; Alan Morrison, Head of the Organ Department at the world-renowned Curtis Institute of Music; and Todd Wilson, Head of the Organ Department at The Cleveland Institute of Music and Curator of the E.M. Skinner pipe organ at Severance Hall in Cleveland, OH. Haig Mardirosian, Dean Emeritus of the College of Arts and Letters, and Professor Emeritus of Music at the University of Tampa, served as Master of Ceremonies.

About the Winners

Sebastian Heindl, 21, Germany

Sebastian Heindl received his fundamental musical education as a chorister in St. Thomas Boys Choir Leipzig, and contributed as a youngster organist to the BBC TV documentary *Bach: A Passionate Life* with Sir John Eliot Gardiner at the famous Trost organ in Altenburg. Heindl recorded his debut CD at age 17 at Magdeburg Cathedral. Heindl studies church music at the University of Music in Leipzig, and in 2017 won the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition.

Bryan Anderson, 26, US

Bryan Anderson enjoys a varied career as a concert organist and church musician. For several years, Anderson was an assistant organist at the Wanamaker Grand Court Organ. He performed at the OHS National Convention in 2014 and the AGO National Convention in 2012, and has been featured on APM's *Pipedreams*. Bryan is employed as interim director of music of St. Thomas' Episcopal Church and School in Houston, TX. He recently held positions at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Houston, and Wells Cathedral in Somerset, England.

Colin MacKnight, 25, US

Colin MacKnight is a third year C.V. Starr Doctoral Fellow at The Juilliard School, where he also completed his bachelor's and master's degrees, and serves as Associate Organist/Choirmaster at Cathedral of the Incarnation on Long Island. MacKnight's first prizes and scholarships include the 2017 West Chester University International Organ Competition, 2016 Albert Schweitzer Organ Competition, 2016 Arthur Poister Scholarship Competition, M. Louise Miller Scholarship from the Greater Bridgeport Chapter of the American Guild of Organists (AGO), the 2013 Rodgers North American Classical Organ Competition, and the Ruth and Paul Manz Organ Scholarship, as well as the Clarence Snyder Third Prize in the 2016 Longwood Gardens International Organ Competition.

About Longwood Gardens

In 1906, industrialist Pierre du Pont (1870-1954) purchased a small farm near Kennett Square, PA, to save a collection of historic trees from being sold for lumber. Today, Longwood Gardens is one of the world's great horticultural displays, encompassing 1,100 acres of dazzling gardens, woodlands, meadows, fountains, 10,010-pipe Aeolian organ and 4.5-acre conservatory. Longwood continues the mission set forth by Mr. du Pont to inspire people through excellence in garden design, horticulture, education and the performing arts, through programming that includes exhibitions, musical performances by leading artists, renowned horticulture education programs, horticulture research, environmental stewardship and community engagement.

Open daily, Longwood is one of more than 30 gardens in the Philadelphia region known as America's Garden Capital.

For more information, visit

<https://longwoodgardens.org>

Website of the winner Sebastian Heindl

<http://www.sebastianheindl.de>