

Organ Recital



PERFORMANCE BY

Dr. Steven Ball of Boardwalk Hall, Atlantic City

Friday, June 2, 8 p.m.
Rooke Chapel – No charge

Sponsored by the Class of 1957

Everyone is invited for this special performance by Dr. Steven Ball of the Historic Boardwalk Hall, Atlantic City, NJ. Dr. Ball is a master of “the largest instrument on Earth,” a pipe organ containing 33,112 pipes. Dr. Ball will showcase Bucknell’s Reuter pipe organ, one of the largest in central Pennsylvania.



ABOUT STEVEN BALL

Steven Ball occupies a rather unique place in the musical world of the organ. In addition to being a Fulbright Scholar, he is part of a small number of artists proficient in the genre of the theater organ ever to have achieved a doctoral degree in music, and the first to have ever done so with a



degree in organ performance. Widely recognized for his scholarship both with classical improvisation as well as the art of silent film composition and accompaniment, he has traveled and performed extensively in both the United States and abroad including concerts in The Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, France, Portugal,

Ireland, England and Switzerland. Some important firsts include the world premiere of the first concerto for theater organ and orchestra (*Once Upon a Castle*, 2003, by Michael Daugherty) and the first silent film accompanied by a carillon.

Originally from a small farm near Wright, Michigan, Dr. Ball began playing the organ at a very young age. By the time he was six, he was both studying piano and attempting to

complete a single stop pipe organ which his father and he had begun engineering together in the basement of their family home. He began accompanying church services on a regular basis by the age of nine, and started formal organ studies not long after with Dr. John Hammersma of Calvin College. By the age of 16 he was accepted as an undergraduate in the studio of Dr. Marilyn Mason of the University of Michigan. His undergraduate studies in organ performance were followed by several years of study abroad which included work at l’Institute de Touraine in Tours (France), the University of Utrecht and Royal Dutch Carillon School of Amersfoort (The Netherlands as well as the Royal Carillon School of Mechelen (Belgium). He was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship by the United States Government in 2002.

Dr. Ball now is Organist and Director of Outreach for the world’s largest pipe organ located at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, NJ. Previous to this appointment, he was University Carillonneur at the University of Michigan, as well as a member of the Faculty of the Organ Department in addition to being Director of the Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments.



continued

Organ Recital



(About Steven Ball continued)

His work at Historic Boardwalk Hall now focuses on returning the Midmer-Losh pipe organ — famously the largest musical instrument on earth — to fully operational, a situation which has not been realized since the Great Atlantic Hurricane of 1944. The 10-year, \$16 million restoration of the instrument is being led by the Historic Organ Restoration Committee (a 501c3 nonprofit corporation). Restoration efforts have recently returned approximately 25% of the instrument to operation, and it can now be heard increasingly for shows in the building, as well as free daily noon recitals Monday – Friday, May – October. More information about this can be found by visiting the website BoardwalkHall.com. Visit stevenball.com for more information about Dr. Ball.

Bucknell expresses appreciation to Billie Jane Boyer Maul '57 and other members of the Class of 1957 for making this Organ Recital possible. Billie Jane is Reunion Co-Chair with Patricia (Wenk) Strachan for the Class of 1957's 60th-year reunion. Billie Jane also serves as a volunteer at Boardwalk Hall providing tours and working with a team who have taken on the task of disassembling, cleaning, repairing and re-leathering the world's largest organ for the restoration project. Read the article "Pipe (Organ) Dreams" in the Fall 2015 issue of Bucknell Magazine for more information.

ABOUT THE ROOKE CHAPEL ORGAN

The chapel's three-manual electro-pneumatic organ, a gift of Robert L. Rooke, is one of the largest pipe organs in central Pennsylvania. It was designed by William D. McRae, former university organist at Bucknell, and Franklin Mitchell, tonal director of the Reuter Organ Company of Lawrence, Kansas, which built the instrument. Virgil Fox, then acclaimed as one of the nation's foremost organists, played the dedicatory concert on April 22, 1965.

Created to fulfill the functions of both a church organ and a concert instrument, the organ is a good example of a flexible, broad American organ of the period, designed to do justice to music of any classical period without specialization. The organ has three manuals (keyboards), and 55 ranks of pipes in five divisions, with a total of 3,500 pipes altogether. The organ pipes are in a large chamber behind the chancel's brushed steel organ screen (designed by Louis S. Armento). The screen is covered by a blue mesh cloth transparent to sound. The organ's blowers are housed in a separate room off a rear staircase. In 1991, in honor of Robert L. Rooke's 100th birthday, his grandchildren and their families contributed the 61-pipe *trompette en chamade* installed in the chapel balcony. The organ console was completely replaced in 2002.

