

### Curtis Institute of Music Premieres Innovative Dobson Opus 100 Pipe Organ at Dedication Recital on March 31

*Custom-designed by Dobson Pipe Organ Builders, the instrument is a long-term investment in the school's strategic vision, organ department, and talented young musicians.*

**PHILADELPHIA, PA—March 25, 2026—Curtis Institute of Music** is delighted to premiere its new Opus 100 pipe organ, custom-designed by Dobson Pipe Organ Builders of Lake City, Iowa, in a celebratory dedication recital on **Tuesday, March 31 at 7:30 p.m.** in **Field Concert Hall**. The innovative instrument—equipped with a dedicated auxiliary console solely for teaching—replaces the original 1941 Aeolian-Skinner organ, expanded in 1974, which had reached the end of its lifespan.

Funded by a portion of an anonymous \$20 million gift in 2021, and gifts from additional donors, the Dobson Opus 100 gives Curtis students the opportunity to study and perform on a world-class, innovative concert instrument. With just five students in Curtis' organ department, each musician benefits from exceptional access to the instrument—allowing for a deeper, more hands-on engagement that reflects Curtis' learn-by-doing philosophy.

“This instrument gives our students an extraordinary level of access and flexibility in their training,” says **Alan Morrison** ('91, '93), Haas Charitable Trust Chair in Organ Studies.

“With a dedicated auxiliary console designed specifically for teaching, we can work side by side in real time, in a way that simply isn't possible on most instruments. That kind of hands-on experience is invaluable for developing both technical command and artistic voice.”

The installation of the Dobson Opus 100 builds on a long-standing tradition of organ study at Curtis and a broader culture of organ performance in Philadelphia. Trained as both a pianist and organist, founder **Mary Louise Curtis Bok** prioritized giving students access to a high-quality instrument, playing a central role in the installation of the school's first organ, the Aeolian Op. 1625.

—continued—

The new instrument also continues Dobson Pipe Organ Builders' presence in the city. In 2006, the firm installed the Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ in Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts—an instrument that remains central to Philadelphia's musical life. With Opus 100, Curtis both builds on its own legacy of organ instruction and contributes to the city's ongoing tradition of organ performance.

“From the beginning, Mary Louise Curtis Bok understood the importance of giving students access to a truly fine instrument,” says Morrison.

“Opus 100 continues that commitment while also connecting Curtis to Philadelphia's long-standing organ tradition, which will serve the broader classical music community for years to come.”

Curtis' organ dedication recital will feature renowned faculty members **Alan Morrison** ('91, '93), Haas Charitable Trust Chair in Organ Studies, and **Jeffrey Brillhart**, organ improvisation faculty, performing alongside Curtis organ students.

The program includes iconic organ works including Johann Sebastian Bach's Prelude and Fugue in A minor, Camille Saint-Saëns' *Danse Macabre*, and Marcel Dupré's *Deuxième Symphonie*, Op. 26, among others. A reception in the common room will follow.

Admission is free but [advance registration](#) is required. Ticket reservations are available through [curtis.edu](#).

### **Philanthropic Support for Opus 100**

Curtis' new Opus 100 organ has been made possible through the generous support of an anonymous donor, Elizabeth and Thomas Carroll<sup>^</sup>, Richard Fairman, Terence J. Flanagan\*, Marci Generose, Charles and Sue Glandorf<sup>^</sup>, Lisa and Gie Liem<sup>^</sup>, Joan Lippincott\*, John H. McFadden and Lisa D. Kabnick, Alan Morrison\* and Angelo Marabella, Cherry Rhodes\*, Kathleen and Gary Robinson<sup>^</sup>, Richard and Amanda Smoot, and Drew H. Taylor and Lisa Huang.

*\*alumni <sup>^</sup>parent*

*The Opus 100 organ is dedicated to the memory of organ alumna Stephanie Liem Azar ('08).*

—continued—

### **About Opus 100**

Built by Dobson Pipe Organ Builders, Opus 100 was designed specifically for Field Concert Hall and for the pedagogical needs of Curtis students. Working with Curtis' organ committee, Dobson drew inspiration from 19th-century American and central European instruments. Mindful of Philadelphia's rich organ heritage, Opus 100 forges its own path by exploring the 19th century's love of color and dynamic contrast—a "grand salon" aesthetic that's well suited to Field Concert Hall. Opus 100 includes 4,698 pipes, 73 ranks, four manuals and pedalboards, and an auxiliary teaching console that allows faculty to demonstrate technique with unprecedented clarity. The instrument's installation began in July 2025, when the components arrived from Dobson's workshop in Lake City, Iowa, and continued through months of careful assembly and voicing. This innovative instrument replaces the previous 1941 Aeolian-Skinner organ, expanded in 1974, which had reached the end of its lifespan.

### **About the Curtis Institute of Music**

At Curtis, the world's great young musicians develop into exceptional artists, creators, and innovators. With a tuition-free foundation, Curtis is a unique environment for teaching and learning. A small school by design, students realize their artistic potential through intensive, individualized study with the most renowned, sought-after faculty. Animated by a learn-by-doing philosophy, Curtis students share their music with audiences through more than 100 performances each year, including solo and chamber recitals, orchestral concerts, and opera—all free or at an affordable cost—offering audiences unique opportunities to participate in pivotal moments in these young musicians' careers. Curtis students experience a close connection to the greatest artists and organizations in classical music, and innovative initiatives that integrate new technologies and encourage entrepreneurship—all within an historic campus in the heart of culturally rich Philadelphia. In this diverse, collaborative community, Curtis' extraordinary artists challenge, support, and inspire one another—continuing an unparalleled legacy of musicians who have led, and will lead, classical music into a thriving, equitable, and multidimensional future. Learn more at [curtis.edu](https://www.curtis.edu).

# # #