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Spivey Hall Education Launches Online Distance Learning

“The King of Instruments: History, Science and Music of the Pipe Organ” Provides Music Education for Elementary Students Worldwide

MORROW GA (March 1, 2018) – Clayton State University’s [Spivey Hall](#) has long supported music education for Atlanta-area students of all ages with workshops, festivals and most notably its annual series of [Young People’s Concerts](#). This season, the venerable concert venue brings music education to students literally worldwide with the launch of its first online distance learning program, *The King of Instruments: History, Science and Music of the Pipe Organ*, a three-part video featuring Spivey Hall’s Organist-in-Residence [Alan Morrison](#) and the Hall’s magnificent 4,413-pipe [Albert Schweitzer Memorial Organ](#).

“Spivey Hall has always approached music education with passion and innovation,” said Melanie Darby, Spivey Hall’s education manager. “While music is something that lends itself to being learned and experienced in person, the fact is that many students are unable to travel to Spivey Hall either because of budget restrictions or just being too far away. Now if they have internet access, these students can enjoy all the benefits of music education without the costs. Plus, the teacher can set the pace of the program and students can learn in their own comfortable environment.”

In the video, students begin with the history of the pipe organ, starting with its origins as a water instrument in ancient Greece and Rome and continuing on through its evolution starting in the 10th century as a complex instrument at the heart of Western church music. The video explains the inner workings of the organ and the science behind its ability to produce all its different sounds and timbres. Morrison plays several selections that capture the full power of the Spivey instrument and talks about the composers who helped create the organ’s vast repertoire spanning over 500 years. In keeping with the theme of an educational video geared for younger students, common questions, such as “Why is the organ so big?” or “Why are there so many pipes?” are interspersed throughout the video asked by children on-camera. These questions are used to open many of the sections.

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Morrison shares hosting duties with **Thomas J. McCook**, president of Widener and Company and Spivey Hall's organ curator, and **Dwight Jones**, founder and president of Integrated Organ Technologies, who created the computer that controls the Schweitzer Memorial Organ. During the course of the three-part video, the three examine and explain Spivey's organ literally from top to bottom, inside and out, leaving the students with a thorough understanding of the instrument and hopefully creating a desire to see it, hear it and feel it in person in the acoustically superior environs of Spivey Hall.

The King of Instruments was created by Atlanta production company [WaveGuide Studios](#) as the centerpiece of an educational package for third- and fourth-grade classrooms across the country. Produced and posted in 4K UHD, it is the first in a series of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) integrated teaching programs developed by Spivey Hall for school children. The video received enthusiastic praise from educators who were given advance previews of the program, and has won a total of eight festival and competition awards, including two Telly awards for Children's Audience and Graphics; a Summit Creative award for Educational Programming; an award from the MCA-I Media Festival for Educational Videos; two Communicator Awards from the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts for Children's Audience and Graphics; and two Davey awards for Children's Audience and Educational Videos.

Production of *The King of Instruments* was made possible through a generous grant from the Chaparral Foundation with additional financial support from the Spivey Hall Friends.

Non-profit instructional use of the video is available at no charge through a registration process. Educators interested in accessing *The King of Instruments* should contact Melanie Darby at melaniedarby@clayton.edu or 678.466.4481. A [clip](#) of the video can be viewed online on YouTube.

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About Spivey Hall

Now celebrating its 27th season, [Spivey Hall](#) is the South's most acoustically superior recital hall, presenting the best in classical, jazz and world music. Located on the picturesque campus of Clayton State University in Morrow, Georgia, just fifteen miles southeast of Atlanta, the hall has been praised by artists, patrons and journalists alike.

An intimate venue with just 392 seats, Spivey Hall promotes for the concert-goer a personal connection with the artist both during and after the performance. Spivey's extraordinary acoustics and reputation for distinguished programming attract outstanding international musicians who regularly perform at the nation's major concert venues such as Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall. For more information, visit spiveyhall.org.

Clayton State University's Spivey Hall gratefully acknowledges the support of The Walter and Emilie Spivey Foundation and the Spivey Hall Friends.

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Alan Morrison holds the McGehee Family Organist Residency at Spivey Hall.



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About Alan Morrison

Alan Morrison is recognized as one of America's premier concert organists, performing in prestigious concert organ venues across the United States and in Canada, as well as in international festivals. He is a champion of twentieth- and twenty-first-century composers, personally introducing their works to audiences in recitals and concerts, and enjoys collaborating with vocalists and other instrumentalists in chamber programs.

In addition to serving as organist in residence at Spivey Hall, Morrison is the head of the organ department at The Curtis Institute of Music, organ faculty at Westminster Choir College of Rider University and college organist at Ursinus College. Morrison has been chosen by his peers to perform for four national conventions of the AGO (Atlanta '92, New York City '96, Philadelphia '02 and Chicago '06) as well as numerous regional conventions.

A graduate of both Curtis Institute of Music (BMus in Organ and MMus in Piano Accompanying) and Juilliard School of Music (Professional Studies in Organ), his teachers were Sarah Martin, Cherry Rhodes and John Weaver (organ) and Robert Harvey, Vladimir Sokoloff and Susan Starr (piano). In his student years he captured First Prize in numerous organ competitions including the Arthur Poister National Organ Playing Competition (1991) and the Clarence Mader National Organ Competition (1991) which offered the highest cash prize of any US competition at that time. He also won the Silver Medal at the 1994 Calgary International Organ Festival and Competition.

About Clayton State University

A unit of the University System of Georgia, Clayton State University is an outstanding comprehensive metropolitan university located 15 miles southeast of downtown Atlanta. For more information, visit clayton.edu.

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