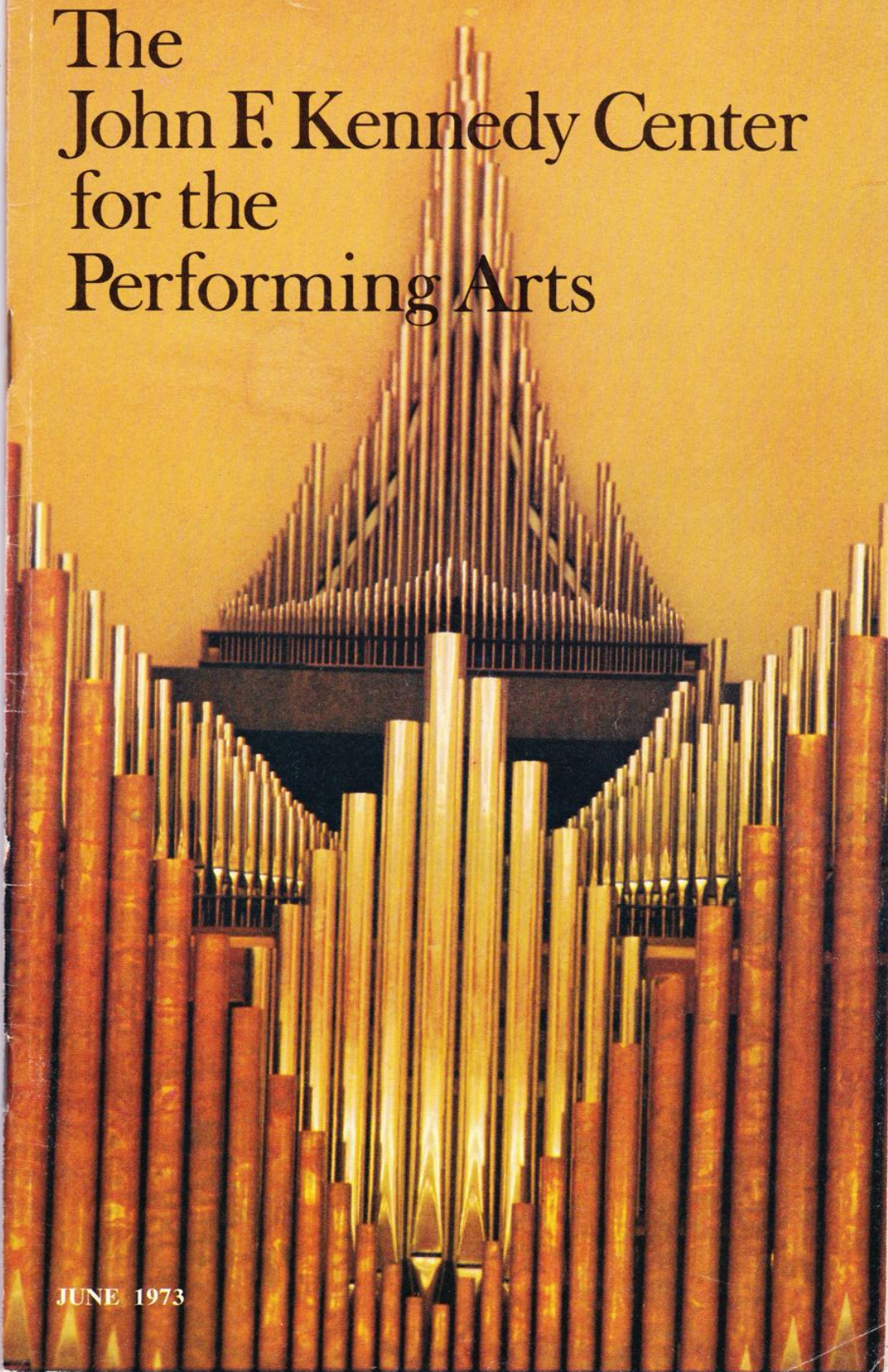


The  
John F. Kennedy Center  
for the  
Performing Arts



JUNE 1973

CONCERT HALL

Monday Evening, June 18, 1973, at 8:30

# Marilyn Mason Organ Recital

Twentieth-Century Music for the Organ

EDMUND HAINES

\*Suite for Organ (1948)

Promenade

Air

Toccatà

This work was commissioned by Marilyn Mason and is dedicated to her. It won the American Guild of Organists composition in 1948.

ERNEST KRENEK (b. 1900)

\*"Orga-Nastro," for Organ and Electronic Tape, Op. 212 (1971)

Krenek's work was commissioned by Marilyn Mason and is dedicated to her. Concerning it, the composer has written:

The structure of the piece is loosely knit, more in the manner of a toccata, or fantasy, than a sonata or fugue. This is in keeping with the character of the electronic medium that lends itself to improvisational procedures of composition rather than to rigid construction.

The following sequence of sections may be distinguished more or less clearly: a prevailing slow opening, with many sustained electronic sounds; a more agitated section of dramatic contrasts of dynamics, ending with three wave-like electronic sounds in the high register; a cadenza-like interlude for organ alone; a gently animated section, in which arpeggio-like features of the tape blend with similar figurations on the organ; a brilliant coda of fast runs, introduced by echoing signal-like and gong-type electronic sounds.

The title of the piece refers to the Italian term "nastro" for recording tape.

ALAIN (1911-1940)

Trois Danses

Joies

Deuils (Danse funebre)

Luttes

Alain's organ music has had considerable acclaim, and were it not for his untimely death, he probably would have become one of the leaders of French composition.

The first dance, "Joies," presents two themes. The first is, as the composer suggests, on solo reed colors, while the strongly rhythmic second is presented in a brighter sound and immediately repeated. In the middle section of the work, the first theme is developed in the right hand; the second theme with newly added harmonies, in the left. The work closes with a brilliant finale followed by a sombre melody.

The second dance, "Funeral Dance", is a passacaglia based on a foreboding diatonic theme. A prominent technique found in this movement is the use of harmonies derived from modal scales. The dance ends with a mournful chant-like melody.

The third dance, "Struggles," contains no new material and therefore summarizes the previous dances. The themes "struggle" for domination, their rhythmic drive bringing the work to an intense, abrupt close, aptly designated by the composer as *brutalement*.

### Intermission

JEAN JULES ROGER DUCASSE  
Pastorale (1909)

"The Pastorale for organ, written in 1909, is dedicated to Mlle. Nadia Boulanger and was given its first performance April 20, 1910, by Alexander Guilmant. It is a work of charming and graceful construction and the reflective mood which pervades throughout captivates irresistibly. . . . The sonority attained through the registration, the various canons, (in two, three and four parts, distributed among the manuals in different rhythms), and the organistic writing, are all exquisite. The end, with its attenuated feeling, is of exceeding beauty. One regrets this charming pastorale is almost inaccessible because of the difficulty of its execution. Many instruments cannot do justice to the intricate writing and the registrational demands. *Roger-Ducasse, Le Musicien-L'Oeuvre* by Laurent Cellier

ALDEN ASHFORTH

\*†Sailing To Byzantium (1973)

Yeats' poem *Sailing to Byzantium* expresses a desire to leave behind the transient temporal sensual world and retreat to the eternal world of the spirit, of art and of intellect: "the artifice of eternity." His image of this unaging realm, "the holy city of Byzantium," was inspired by reading that in the Byzantine Emperor's palace there was a tree of singing birds entirely wrought of silver and gold. The notion of a voyage from nature to art, from the world of reality to an artificial world existing outside of real time, struck me as a provocative musical scenario.

The piece is in four sections. The opening section, suggesting the temporal world of the senses, includes such real sounds as brooks and birds and a melody hummed by a lyric tenor (Dennis Heath). In the second section, where both organ and tape are in transition to a different sort of world, the electronic sounds are constituted of materials created by encephalo-electronic (bio-feedback) means, whereby such dimensions as pitch, attack, and vibrato were produced by controlling electronic synthesizers directly by my own brain waves (amplified up to a million times). In the third section the organ and tape achieve a condition of melodic and harmonic balance and stasis. The organ solo of the final section, transforming the opening melody through variation techniques, is ultimately joined by "birds" that are entirely artificially wrought.

The subjective process of psychological and spiritual transformation is the intended essence of this aural migration.

ALDEN ASHFORTH

LEO SOWERBY (1895-1968)  
Pageant (1931)

Leo Sowerby was born May 1, 1895, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His father was English and his mother Canadian. He graduated from the American Conservatory in Chicago in 1918, and was the first American composer to be awarded the Prix de Rome, spending three years (1921-1924) in the Italian capital. For many years he was on the faculty of his alma mater as well as the Organist and Choirmaster at Saint James' Episcopal Church in Chicago. Later and until his death in 1968, he was Director of the College of Church Musicians, attached to the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Because of his prolific writings and his influence on his many students, Dr. Sowerby may be considered the dean of American composers for the organ.

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\* Commissioned by Marilyn Mason and dedicated to her.

† First performance anywhere.

Lilian Murtagh Concert Management, Box 272, Canaan, Connecticut 06018

Dr. Marilyn Mason, a master in her profession and one of the outstanding organists in the world, is chairman of the Organ Department at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. University officials permit her to take periodic leaves from her teaching to make concert tours which have taken her throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, South America, Europe and Australia. In 1957 Dr. Mason was the first American woman to be invited to play at Westminster Abbey. During her sixth tour of Europe, from which she recently returned, she gave a concert in the famous Abbey for the third time. Marilyn Mason, born in Oklahoma, was first taught to play the organ by her mother. Later she was awarded a scholarship to the University of Michigan where she studied with Palmer Christian. She was awarded her Master's Degree at the University, and her Doctorate of Sacred Music Degree at the Union Theological Seminary, New York. Because of her interest in contemporary music, Dr. Mason has commissioned numerous composers to write for the organ and has given many premiere performances.

The 4,000-pipe Kennedy Center organ, valued at over \$160,000, was designed by Joseph Whiteford, a former president of Aeolian Skinner, the company which manufactured the instrument. A former resident of Chevy Chase, Maryland, who now lives in Tucson, Arizona, Mr. Whiteford also designed the organs in Philadelphia's Academy of Music, Detroit's Ford Auditorium, and before that the instruments in both Philharmonic Hall and the Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center. Not the largest organ in Washington — those in Washington Cathedral and the National Shrine are larger — it was designed to fit the requirements of any orchestral, choral or recital musical literature. Mrs. Jouett Shouse, a member of the Kennedy Center's Board of Trustees, gave the organ through the Filene Foundation of Boston in memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln Filene. A generous contributor to the arts, she recently made a gift to the government of one hundred acres at her estate in Fairfax County, Virginia, which has become the nation's first national park devoted to the performing arts.




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