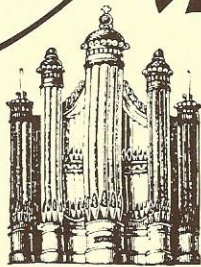


Organ
Artists
Series



Presented by
Pittsburgh Chapter
American Guild of Organists



THE ORGAN ARTISTS SERIES

*Sponsored by the Pittsburgh Chapter,
American Guild to Organists*

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The American Guild of Organists was founded in New York in 1896 by forward-looking organists throughout the United States. It has since become a great and influential national organization. The Guild has a national active membership exceeding 18,000 and Chapters of Branches in every State, the District of Columbia, and the Panama Canal Zone—over 296 in all.

The Pittsburgh Chapter was founded by twenty-five charter members in 1921. Two of those charter members, Mr. Charles A.H. Pearson and Mr. Harold E. Schunemann remain active in the Guild to the present. Now, the Pittsburgh Chapter numbers more than 400 active members, and stands as the largest single chapter in the national organization. It has hosted one national convention, two regional conventions, and plays an active roll in the national organization.

The Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Guild of Organists has played, and continues to play a vital role in the musical and cultural life of Western Pennsylvania. This premier season of the Organ Artists Series begins a new chapter in the Guild's record of service to the community, by bringing to Pittsburgh the opportunity to hear the world's foremost organists perform in a concert setting.

The
J.P. MAROOK CO.
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Salutes

The
Pittsburgh Chapter
of the
American Guild of Organists
and the
Organ Artists Series



TONIGHT'S ARTIST

MARILYN MASON is University Organist and Chairman of the Organ Department of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She has served as guest Professor of Organ at Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary, from which she received the Doctor of Sacred Music degree.

Dr. Mason has performed extensively on five continents—North and South America, Europe, Africa, and Australia. She was the first American woman organist to perform in Westminster Abbey, when she represented the United States at the International Congress of Organists in 1957. Subsequent tours of Europe included return engagements at Westminster Abbey, as well as appearances in London (Royal Festival Hall), Edinburgh, Hamburg, Berlin, Vienna, and Paris (Notre Dame Cathedral), to name only a few.

In 1960, she performed four concerts at the Auditorium Nacional in Mexico City, thus becoming the first woman organist to perform in Latin America. She performed and taught extensively at the International Festival of Music in Brazil for several years. In 1970, she became the first American organist to perform in Egypt, with two appearances in Cairo—in solo recital and with the National Philharmonic in concert.

Miss Mason's repertoire is immense, covering every period of literature. Her performances are noted for the vitality, great sweep, and kaleidoscopic registration; she has served as adjudicator at almost every major competition in the world. Her extensive artistic achievements include those of recitalist, teacher, judge; and recording artist; and in further contribution to her profession, she has commissioned many new works by contemporary American composers, each dedicated to and premiered by her.

Casavant Frères
LIMITÉE

Organ of the *Artists*

DISTRICT SALES REPRESENTATIVE:
JOHN A. ROMER

6818 RICKER COURT
PITTSBURGH, PA. 15202
(412) 766-8541



PROGRAM

Flourish and Fugue *John Cook*

Magnificat du Troisieme Ton *Jean Adam Guilain*

Plein Jeu
Quatuor
Dialogue de Voix humaine
Basse de Trompette
Duo
Grand Jeu

Tocatta, Adagio and Fugue, BWV 564 *Johann Sebastian Bach*

INTERMISSION

*Auden Variations, Op. 136 *Vincent Persichetti*

Chorale

- Variation: 1. A bene placido
2. Affabile
3. Comodo
4. Ben articolato
5. Sostenuto
6. Gentile
7. Ben proclamato
8. Cantilena
9. Tranquilo
10. Serioso
11. Rigoroso
12. Con agilita
13. Risoluto

Troisieme Chorale *Cesar Franck*

Deux Esquisses, Op. 41 *Marcel Dupre*

- I. E minor
II. B-flat minor

**Pittsburgh premiere performance.*

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

by James C. Hunter

Flourish and Fugue

John Cook
(b. 1923)

John Cook is an English organist transplanted into the American musical scene and now associated with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It was at the other Cambridge in England that he received his baccalaureate degree, and his impeccable credentials a doctorate in music from Durham and, of course, the A.R.M. and F.R.C.O. diplomas. He has authored a list of organ pieces that, while not very extensive, is distinguished by fine craft and a certain freshness of spirit. The "Flourish and Fugue" needs no explanation beyond its title. Written in 1964, it was commissioned by and is dedicated to Marilyn Mason.

Magnificat du Troisieme Ton

Jean Adam Guillaume Guilain
(16-?, 17-?)

All that is known of Guilain is that he was active in Paris at the beginning of the eighteenth century and that he was probably professionally or socially a friend of the then renown Louis Marchand. Marchand's subsequent reputation has been marred by the story of his having failed to show up when his keyboard skills were to have been compared to J.S. Bach's in a competition. The connection with Marchand we glean from the dedication of a group of four Magnificat settings, among which the one on our program appears.

The practical end to which these pieces were put were in those services of which the Magnificat would be a part, its verses being alternately sung by the

choir and "played" upon the organ. Such pieces often had little or no relationship to the sung material and apparently served as background for meditation or as morsels for diversion, depending on the temper of the listener. The charm they exude and the opportunities they afford for piquant organ registration make these pieces favorites among present day recitalists and their audiences. The "titles" of four of the six pieces in this third mode suite on our program are really indications of the organ stops or combinations the composer had in mind for their performance.

Toccat, Adagio and Fugue (B.W.V. 564)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

One of Bach's major achievements was to synthesize the musical procedures of his age in such a way that remarkable hybrids resulted. The opening chorus of Cantata No. 78, for instance, blends the forms of the chaconne, the Italian concerto, and the organ choral into a choral-instrumental work of astonishing richness.

Even during his early years as court organist at Weimer, when he was in his mid-twenties, this process was going on. There he began to know and admire the concerti of Vivaldi and other composers, either Italian or Italianate in their styles. Already steeped in the tradition of the German organists from north and south, he began to seek ways in which to fuse these new influences with the older ones.

Perhaps the strangest of the attempts is the Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C-major. Here a brilliant manual

flourish and an extended pedal solo, all in the rhapsodic north German manner, lead to a model Italian concerto movement, whose ritornelli and episodes alternate in an overall design of tightly organized key areas. An Adagio follows at once, its idiom being that of a violin solo with cembalo chords and pizzicato bass. The last chord merges into a bridge passage of monumental harmonic richness that could only be from Bach's pen and which takes us directly to a fugue having the character of a rollicking dance.

This is certainly "organ recital music", and was no doubt intended as a vehicle whereby the Duke of Weimar could show off his organist's astonishing prowess to guests or to envious nobles at neighboring courts. Virtuosity and expressive playing both have a place in this work.

Yet Bach never again was to insert a slow movement between any of the paired preludial movements and fugues that he was subsequently to write. This Toccata, Adagio and Fugue remains unique among his organ compositions.

Auden Variations, Op. 136

Vincent Persichetti
(b. 1915)

Born in Philadelphia and for many years a respected teacher of composition at Juilliard, Vincent Persichetti is one of America's most admired and frequently performed composers.

A 1939 graduate of the Curtis Institute, he later studied with Roy Harris. He makes free and rather eclectic use of contemporary musical resources without departing from a basically traditional foundation.

The opus number of the Auden Variations point to Persichetti's fecundity as a composer. Having been an organist at one time in his earlier career, Persichetti has written several

important works for that instrument. These variations are still in manuscript, having been commissioned in 1978 for a festival at Hartt College and premiered by Leonard Raver. They are based upon an original theme by Persichetti—a hymn written to a text by W.H. Auden that begins: "Our Father, whose creative will..." In deference to this recently deceased poet, Persichetti has entitled his work "Auden Variations."

Troisieme Chorale

Cesar Franck
(1822-1890)

Franck's last works were three organ pieces having the dimensions of symphonic movements yet bearing the modest and cryptic title of "Chorales." There common ground plan involves the growth of a hymn-like theme, in the case of the second Chorale through its development from a ground bass theme, and, in the case of the other two, through the triumph of the theme over competing material.

The third Chorale lends itself most readily to extra-musical interpretation. Despite the claim of D'Indy and other Franckolators that the modest composer was too filled with goodness to portray evil forces, Franck manages to open this work with a turbulent toccata-like passage that might well be taken as a representation of things sinister. The solemn hymn-theme follows, its two statements interrupted by the "evil" patterns. Then there breaks on the scene an Adagio melody, one of Franck's most beautiful inspirations. But could it be taken to represent the blandishments of earthly love? For it too is interrupted by the hymn-theme as though by admonishing angelic voices. The two ideas entwine, and the Adagio moves to a powerful climax. Then, after a pause, the sinister toccata of the opening returns, only to find itself overridden by

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM (Continued)

the hymn melody, which soars triumphantly over all to bring the work to a grand close.

It may all be a bit theatrical, but it's well to remember that Franck was still very much part of the romantic era, and that he died only four years after Liszt, whose extravagances we so readily accept.

It also should be remarked that Liszt and Franck were the first two romantic composers to have at their disposal the new mechanical and tonal resources of organs that, in their flexible handling and colorful tonal palettes, reflected the aspirations of the musical minds of the age.

We should therefore grant Cavaille-Coll, the noted French organ builder responsible for Franck's instrument at the church of Ste. Clotilde, at least some of the credit for the existence of such works as the Franck Chorals.



Deux Esquisses, Op. 41

Marcel Dupre
(1886-1971)

Many in the audience will remember Marcel Dupre's performances here in Calvary Church. Early in his long career he rose to the position of the world's most renowned organ virtuoso—one whose meticulous execution was matched by his phenomenal powers of improvisation. His performance from memory, in 1920, of the complete Bach organ works set the seal on his illustrious reputation.

As a composer, particularly as a composer of organ music, Dupre also won considerable esteem in the musical world. Always the superb craftsman and always imaginatively resourceful, he enriched the literature of his chosen instrument with works that might not reach masterpiece levels, but which none-the-less represent worthily the great line of French composer-organists to which he belonged.

The two sketches, Op. 41, were originally to have been part of a group of twelve transcendently difficult studies for organ. Each deals with a specific technical problem, repeated notes in one and octaves in the other.

COMING EVENTS

May 21, 1979—Joyce Jones

September 23, 1979—Jane Parket-Smith

October 21, 1979—Robert Noehren
