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50TH
ANNIVERSARY

DENVER
CHAPTER

AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

Program



Marilyn Mason
Organist

Montview Boulevard
Presbyterian Church
8:00 p.m.
January 31, 1986

Magnificat (Premier Livre de
Pieces d'Orgue, 1739)

Jean Francois Dandrieu
(1682-1738)

Plein Jeu
Duo

Tierce en Taille
Basse de Cromorne
Recit de Nazard
Dialogue

Fantasia and Fugue in G minor
BWV 542

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Miniature (1958)*

Jean Langlais
(b. 1907)

Quiet Design (1954)*

Normand Lockwood
(b. 1906)

Flourish and Fugue (1959)*

John Cook
(b. 1918)

*Commissioned by and dedicated to Marilyn Mason.

INTERMISSION

De spiritum (1980)
(World Premiere)

William Albright
(b. 1944)

Written for Marilyn Mason and commissioned by the Marilyn Mason Commissioning Fund and the 50th Anniversary Fund of the Denver Chapter.

Assistants: Joseph M. Galema, Jr.
Mary Milligan

This concert is cosponsored by Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church.

Program Notes

The **Magnificat** (Hymn of the Virgin Mary) comes from St. Luke's gospel. It is usually sung, but the practice of performing alternate verses with the organ began in the 17th century. Because there are 12 verses in the Magnificat, composers would write six verses for organ alone. The Baroque composer-organist Dandrieu was especially adept at displaying the colors of the organ, as this Magnificat suite demonstrates. The movement titles refer to registrations ("Plein Jeu" = smaller full organ, as opposed to "grand jeu"; "Tierce en Taille" = Tierce mixture in the tenor; "Basse de Cromorne" = bass on the Cromorne reed; "Recit de Nazard" = Nazard stop in the Swell division). Dandrieu uses the Eighth Tone of the Roman Catholic rite as the chant.

Bach's life and work have been widely reported during the 1985 tercentenary year. On hearing Bach's organ pieces, Goethe is reported to have said, "It is as though eternal harmony were conversing with itself, as it may have happened in God's bosom shortly before He created the world." The **Fantasia and Fugue in G minor** may not have inspired Goethe's remark—but it could have. The fantasia is in the sectional form of a North German prelude, but with daring chromaticism and harmonic surprises. The fugue is reportedly based on a popular Flemish tune that was well known in 18th-century Germany; it is one of Bach's most sophisticated, with two countersubjects and considerable development. The fantasia is believed to date from Bach's years in Coethen (1717-1723) and the fugue from his earlier period in Weimar (1708-1717). Marie-Claire Alain theorizes that the piece was put together for a trip to Hamburg in September 1720.

Three pieces commissioned by Marilyn Mason in the 1950s illustrate the wide range of composers whose works she has premiered. **Jean Langlais** is one of the major French organist-composers of this century. Blind practically from birth, he studied with Andre Marchal, Marcel Dupre, Paul Dukas and Charles Tournemire. He followed Tournemire and Cesar Franck as organist of the Basilica of Ste. Clotilde—a post he has held since 1945. He has published more than 300 compositions, many of them for organ.

Normand Lockwood has become one of Colorado's most renowned composers since he came to the University of Denver as a professor of composition in 1961. A New York native, he attended the University of Michigan before studying abroad with Ottorino Respighi and Nadia Boulanger. He is probably best known for his choral compositions.

John Cook was born in England. He studied organ at Cambridge with Boris Ord and David Willcocks and became a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists. In 1954 he moved to Canada, and he was an organist in London, Ontario, at the time of the Marilyn Mason commission. In 1965 he joined the music faculty at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His only published compositions are for organ.

De spiritum

Notes by William Albright

The title **De spiritum** ("of" or "from the spirit") reflects upon the notion of the organ, with its continual and superhuman supply of wind, as primal and spiritual force. Like electronically assisted music—a medium similarly energized by an unflagging source of power—the organ excels in impersonating the "vox Dei," the voice of God, and it may be for this reason that the "king of instruments" finds itself the favorite of the church, thundering down, as it does, to the faithful from above and behind, or elevating the congregation with celestial infinitudes.

At any rate, these capabilities, theatrical or real as the case may be, form the inspiration for the sections of **De spiritum**:

Introduction: An "index" that displays some of the material to be developed later, combined with a folk-like melody, a primal incantation based on a very few notes (G-E flat-F; G-D-E). Diatonic triads in seemingly wandering relations are introduced, as is a fragment of a rustling "wind-chime" music.

I. "Unity": proposes a monophonic line that increases in range and loudness as it changes from simple pentatonic "black-note" pitches to an entire chromatic collection.

II. "Celestial Duel": Two assistants play a canon of diatonic triads formed by "plaiting," a kind of weaving technique, through a matrix of the four kinds of triads on each level of the chromatic scale except F:

on C: dim. Maj. min. aug.

on C#: dim. Maj. min. aug.

on D: dim. Maj. min. aug.

on D#: dim. Maj. min. aug.

on E: dim. Maj. min. aug.

(etc.)

Meanwhile the organist performs violent battle music (the "duel") beneath an angry, penetrating pedal point on the note F.

III. "Trinity Sonata" is a three-voice movement, the two hands involved with the "wind-chime" murmuring described above, the pedal reiterating the primitive folk melody. The mood is relaxed and static; the counterpoint yearns for grace.

IV. "Origins" develops a musical narrative based on the concept of the overtone series, here based primarily on low C. Sometimes the overtones become so intense and dense that they turn into noise, or screams, or ecstasies—we know not which. An optional bass drum signals primal energy, like cracks of thunder.

V. "Bequeathal" is like a fountain, a multivoiced counterpoint of melodic lines, going from three to as many as nine independent parts, spanning the entire range of the organ, and again involving the use of the two assistants.

A brief Coda displays for a final time the folk tune, as unchanging and as simple as ever.

Marilyn Mason, Organist



Marilyn Mason is Professor of Music and Chairman of the Organ Department at The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She has been guest professor at Columbia University and at Union Theological Seminary, from which she received the Doctor of Sacred Music degree in 1954.

Dr. Mason has been heard in recitals throughout North and South America and Europe. She was the first American woman to play in Westminster Abbey, where she represented the United States at the International Congress of Organists in 1957. Subsequent tours of Europe have included two return engagements at Westminster Abbey, in 1963 and 1966 (the 900th anniversary of the Abbey), and appearances in London, Edinburgh, Hamburg, Berlin, Vienna and Paris.

In 1960, Dr. Mason played four concerts at the Auditorio Nacional in Mexico City, thus becoming the first woman concert organist to perform in Latin America. From 1965 to 1970 she taught and played at the International Festival of Music in Brazil. In 1970 she became the first American organist to perform in Egypt when she appeared in two Cairo concerts.

During the past decade, Dr. Mason has made many more concert and study tours of Europe and has continued her coast-to-coast appearances in the United States and Canada. She was a featured artist at the 1980 National Convention of the American Guild of Organists in Minneapolis, where she premiered a major work by Alberto Ginastera. Her dedication to contemporary music is evidenced by the more than 40 organ pieces that she has commissioned and premiered.

Dr. Mason has also performed as a harpsichordist with violinist Pierre D'Archaubeau in many concerts, including two at New York's Carnegie Recital Hall. She is currently pursuing her commitment to stylistic integrity through research into the construction and tonal design of historic European instruments.



William Albright, Composer

William Albright, a native of Gary, Indiana, has performed as a concert organist and pianist throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. He has premiered more than 30 works by American and European composers, and he is also well known as an interpreter of classic ragtime and early jazz styles.

As a composer, Dr. Albright has produced works for almost every medium, including electronic, visual and theatrical, but he is best known for his keyboard music and sacred compositions. He has received many commissions and awards, including the Queen Marie-Jose Prize (for **Organ-Book I**), an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Fulbright and Guggenheim fellowships, a Symphonic Composition Award, two National Endowment for the Arts Grants and two Koussevitzky Composition Awards.

He has been composer-in-residence or guest composer at a number of schools and festivals, including the American Academy in Rome, the University of Southern California, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, the University of Colorado and the Portland, Oregon, Summer Concerts. His composition teachers have included Ross Lee Finney, Olivier Messiaen, George Rochberg and Aaron Copland, and he credits Marilyn Mason as his principal organ teacher.

Dr. Albright is currently Professor of Music Composition at The University of Michigan, where he is also Associate Director of the Electronic Music Studio. In 1973 he was honored with a Distinguished Service Award from the university. His recent commissions include an opera, **The Magic City**, for The University of Michigan School of Music; an organ work for the "Bach year" celebrations in Leipzig; and a piece for choir, organ and audience entitled **A Song to David**. He is presently working on an organ solo for the 1986 National Convention of the American Guild of Organists in Detroit, where he will be in the company of such featured composers as Messiaen, Virgil Thomson and Sir David Willcocks.

Dr. Albright appears as composer or performer on the CRI, Nonesuch, Crystal, Advance, Grenadilla, Trilogy, Opus One and Musical Heritage recording labels. His compositions are published mainly by C.F. Peters, Elkan-Vogel, Jobert (Presser) and E.B. Marks.

About the Organ

The Reuter organ at Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church was dedicated on Jan. 19, 1958, by its consultant, Dr. William H. Barnes. It is a double organ with pipes in two locations. The gallery or main division has a console with four manuals and pedals that can be used to play the chancel division. The chancel division also has its own two-manual, drawknob-type console. The organ stands 35 feet high and has a total of 4,704 pipes. Excluding couplers, reversibles, pistons and expression pedals, the specifications are as follows:

Pedal		Choir	
Bourdon	32'	Viola	8'
Contra Basse	16'	Quintaten	8'
Bourdon	16'	Gemshorn	8'
Flauto Dolce (Sw)	16'	Gemshorn Celeste	8'
Subprincipal (Gt)	16'	Koppel Flute	4'
Flauto Dolce Quinte (Sw)	10 2/3'	Fugara	4'
Octave	8'	Nasard	2 2/3'
Bourdon	8'	Doublette	2'
Flauto Dolce (Sw)	8'	Tierce	1 3/5'
Subprincipal (Gt)	8'	Sifflothe	1'
Twelfth	5 1/3'	Cymbel	III
Super Octave	4'	Clarinet	8'
Bourdon	4'	Schalmei	4'
Mixture	III	Tremolo	
Bombarde	16'	Solo	
Fagotto (Sw)	16'	Viole de Gambe	8'
Bombarde	8'	Viole Celeste	8'
Fagotto (Sw)	8'	Principal	4'
Bombarde	4'	Harmonics	IV
Swell		Tuba	8'
Flauto Dolce	16'	Cor Anglais	8'
Geigen Principal	8'	Tremolo	
Rohrflute	8'	Chancel Swell	
Viole de Gambe	8'	Rohrflotenbass	16'
Viole Celeste	8'	Waldflote	8'
Flauto Dolce	8'	Dolcan	8'
Flute Celeste	8'	Dolcan Celeste	8'
Principal	4'	Rohrflote	4'
Flauto Traverso	4'	Rohr Nasat	2 2/3'
Flauto Dolce	4'	Rohrflote	2'
Block Flute	2'	Basset	16'
Plein Jeu	III	Basset	8'
Fagotto	16'	Chancel Positiv (Unenclosed)	
Trompette	8'	Copula	8'
Fagotto	8'	Principal	4'
Vox Humana	8'	Spitzflote	2'
Clarion	4'	Klein Nasat	1 1/3'
Tremolo		Cymbel	II
Great (Unenclosed)		Chancel Pedal	
Subprincipal	16'	Subbass	16'
Principal	8'	Rohrflotenbass	16'
Gedeckt	8'	Spitz Principal	8'
Spitzflote	8'	Spitz Principal	4'
Octave	4'	Rohrflote	8'
Nachthorn	4'	Dolcan	8'
Fifteenth	2'	Rohrflote	4'
Furniture	IV	Rohrflote	2'
Acuta	III	Basset	16'
		Basset	8'
		Basset	4'