

MUSIC AT BETHESDA  
AND  
THE PALM BEACH COUNTY CHAPTER  
OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS  
PRESENT

Marilyn Mason, organist

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THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF BETHESDA-BY-THE-SEA, PALM BEACH

February 26, 1995

3:00 p.m.

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TOCCATA, ADAGIO AND FUGUE IN C (BWV 564)

J.S. Bach  
(1685-1750)

This work is unique among Bach's 28 larger preludes and fugues for organ. Bach gave it a special place in his canon with its multi-movement shape. Each of the three movements could stand alone. Yet the *Toccata*, with its quasi-Italian influence of question-answer dialogue, and the rousing *Fugue* form pillars framing the quiet, meditative *Adagio*. This music comes from Bach's Weimar years (1708-1717). On hearing Bach's organ music, Goethe is reported to have said, "It is as though the eternal harmony was conversing with itself, as it may have happened in God's bosom shortly before He created the world."

PARTITA: O GOTT, DU FROMMER GOTT (BWV 767)

J.S. Bach

One of the early works of the composer. The theme is heard followed by eight variations.

CHORAL IN A MINOR

César Franck  
(1822-1890)

César Franck, through his teaching and influence as well as his compositions, established a national school of organ music inspired by his desire to provide the best education for his students. He became organist at Ste. Clotilde in Paris in 1885. There is a particular appeal in the life of this Flemish genius who carried out his church duties and his teaching at the Conservatoire in a quiet, unostentatious manner, yet found time for composition.

MARCHE ON A THEME OF HANDEL (Op. 15, No. 2)

Alexandre Guilmant  
(1837-1911)

Alexandre Guilmant was a distinguished French teacher, musician, and composer. He first held the position of organist at the Church of Saint-Joseph, in Boulogne, at the age of 15, and then, following other church and academic appointments, was appointed organist of the Church of the Trinity in Paris in 1871. There he founded the Schola Cantorum with Charles Bordes and Vincent d'Indy and became professor of organ there and at the Paris Conservatoire. His music was composed primarily for the organ and includes eight sonatas and numerous separate compositions for church use.

## AMERICAN COMPOSERS

**SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER** (*Gospel Preludes*, Book IV, 1984)

William Bolcom  
(b. 1938)

William Bolcom is Professor of Music at the University of Michigan. Dr. Bolcom is a prolific composer whose works embrace many composition styles. He has received numerous awards and recognitions, most recently in the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for Music.

**PAGEANT** (1931)

Leo Sowerby  
(1895-1968)

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 St. 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 organ.

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*MARILYN MASON is University Organist and Chairman of the Organ Department of the University of Michigan. Her extensive career as concert organist, lecturer, adjudicator, and teacher has carried her throughout the Western world. She was the first American woman to play in Westminster Abbey, the first woman organist to play in Latin America, and the first American organist to play in Egypt. During one single year, invitations took her to five different continents. She has served as adjudicator at almost every major competition in the world. Marilyn Mason's dedication to contemporary music is evidenced in the over 40 organ works which she has commissioned and premiered. Currently she is pursuing her commitment to stylistic integrity through scholarly research into the construction and tonal design of historic European instruments. Recently several major study tours have focused on Baroque organs in France, North Germany, Saxony, and Spain.*