

Cathedral Concerts 2003 - 2004

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Little Rock, Arkansas

Presents

Marcel Dupré's

"Stations of the Cross"

performed by

Dr. Marilyn Mason



Based on the poetic reflections by Paul Claudel.

*Powerpoint presentation of 120 images of great art depicting
the suffering and death of Christ.*

Friday, 26 March 2004

7:30 p.m.

The Stations of the Cross

Music by Marcel Dupre (1886-1971)

Poetry by Paul Claudel (1868-1955)

Poetry Translated by J. Eric Swenson



I. Jesus is Condemned to Death

The tumult of the crowd and their angry cries for Barrabas can be heard. The name of Barrabas is depicted by one of the rhythmic motives.



II. Jesus Receives His Cross.

Heavy, plodding figures as Jesus Begins the journey toward Golgotha. The cross is symbolized by the ascending fourths.



III. Jesus Falls the First Time

Jesus' suffering is depicted by the descending triplet figure. Reflecting the heavy burden, the music slows to a halt as Jesus falls.



IV. Jesus Meets His Mother.

A peaceful scene as Jesus comforts his mother. The motive of the Virgin Mary is a descending, arpeggiated major chord.



V. Simon the Cyrene Helps Jesus to

Carry the Cross. Jesus' load is lightened by Simon. The canon symbolizes following and sharing. The Cross' motive is heard.



VI. Jesus and Veronica.

The Compassion Motive (two thirds ascending) is combined with the Cross Motive. The movement closes with the Redemption Motive in "Harmonies Mysterieuses."



VII. Jesus Falls a Second Time.

The weariness of Jesus is shown by the descending seconds in the soprano.



VIII. Jesus Comforts the Women of

Jerusalem. The Motive of Pity is heard first. The voice of Jesus (on the trumpet) is then combined with the Pity Motive.



IX. Jesus Falls a Third Time.

A French Toccata. The persecution of Jesus is represented by a three-note figure in the left hand accompanied by an ascending, diminished arpeggiated chord in the right hand.



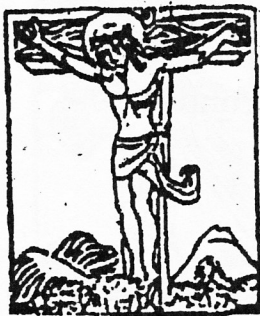
X. Jesus Is Stripped of His Clothes.

The flagellation of Jesus is expressed through a constant, driving rhythm. The movement concludes with the incarnation Motive of ascending minor third dyads.



XI. Jesus is Nailed on the Cross.

The hammer blows on the Crucifixion Motive (descending fourths) are heard throughout the movement. The Motive of Suffering returns near the end.



XII. Jesus Dies Upon the Cross.

His agony is expressed by a quiet four-note motive which fills in a tritone. Suddenly, there is an earthquake and Jesus dies.



XIII. The Body of Jesus is Taken from the Cross and Laid in Mary's Bosom.

The theme of the Virgin Mary returns as Mary beholds His face.



XIV. The Body of Jesus is Laid in the Tomb.

The motives of pity and suffering are combined. Jesus' redemption is depicted in a "final" section by a transformation of the motive of suffering, to a rising motif.

Marilyn Mason, D.S.M., is University Organist and Chair of the Organ Department at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, MI. Her extensive career as concert organist, lecturer, adjudicator, and teacher has carried her throughout the Western world. She was the first American woman organist to perform in Westminster Abbey, the first woman organist to play in Latin America, and the first American organist to perform in Egypt. During one year, invitations took her to five continents. She has served as adjudicator at almost every major organ competition in the world. Ms. Mason's dedication to contemporary music is evidenced by the 60 organ works she has commissioned and premiered. More than 20 research tours have focused on historic organs throughout Europe. In 1987 she was awarded an honorary Doctor of Music by the University of Nebraska. In 1988 she was chosen as Performer of the Year by the New York Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Her discography, on Columbia and Musical Heritage Society labels, includes music of Bach, Handel, and contemporary composers. She is now recording the complete organ works of Pachelbel for the Musical Heritage Society.

Marcel Dupré enjoyed a worldwide reputation for his organ compositions, brilliant organ playing, extraordinary ability at improvisation, and skill as an organ pedagogue. He was organist at the church of Saint Sulpice in Paris, was professor of organ at the Paris National Conservatory, and served for a time as director of the Conservatory.

Composers Notes - "The first sketch of *Le Chemin de la Croix* was conceived and realized in the form of an improvisation, at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Brussels, on 13 February 1931. During the concert, the fourteen poems of *Le Chemin de la Croix* by the great French poet, Paul Claudel, were read, and after each, I improvised a musical commentary. Many in the audience, having expressed their regret that nothing should remain of this spontaneous music, I decided to write the work down, trying to evoke the same atmosphere. Its composition took me an entire year. I gave the first performance in the hall of the Trocadero in Paris on 18 March 1932." Marcel Dupré

The Stations of the Cross refer to a series of pictures or tableaux representing certain scenes in the Passion and Death of Christ, each corresponding to a particular incident connected with the Passion. They are usually arranged at intervals around the walls of a church. The object of the Stations is to help the faithful make, in spirit, a pilgrimage to the principal scenes of Christ's passion and death. The devotion is carried out by passing from Station to Station, meditating on each incident represented in the tableaux. The origin of this devotion is traced to the Holy Land. The route Christ traveled from the place of sentencing to Calvary has been marked since the earliest years of Christianity, and has been the object of pilgrimage since the days of Constantine. There is, however, no direct evidence of a set form of devotion until the seventeenth century, at which time the number of Stations was fixed at fourteen. (*The Catholic Encyclopedia, XV*)

Paul Claudel, dramatist, poet, essayist and diplomat, was one of the most significant French literary figures in the first half of the twentieth century and the outstanding representative of the Catholic literary revival. His set of fourteen poems, *Le Chemin de la Croix*, was written in 1911.

The Woodcuts are by Jean Marchand, from *Le Chemin de la Croix*, by Paul Claudel, published by L'Art Catholique, Paris.

The Reader: Jon Sanford, Russellville, AR, a member of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral.

Our last presentation of the season...

Marek Kudlicki, Concert Organist
Vienna, Austria

Friday, 23 April 2004 7:30 p.m.
Free & open to the public.

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Trinity Episcopal Cathedral

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