

150 UNIVERSITY
OF
EVANSVILLE
1854-2004 Civic Mission... Sacred Trust

3/25/05

DEPARTMENT
MUSIC

2004-2005
Season

MARILYN MASON

Marilyn Mason is University Organist and chairman of the Department of Organ at the University of Michigan. Her extensive career as concert organist, lecturer, adjudicator and teacher has carried her throughout the musical 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 a single year, invitations took her to five continents. Mason has served as judge at nearly every major organ competition in the world. Her dedication to contemporary music is evidenced in the 65 works that she has commissioned and premiered. Currently, she is pursuing her commitment to stylistic integrity through research into the construction and tonal design of historic European instruments. Twenty research tours have focused on historic organs in Europe.

In 1987 Mason was awarded a Doctor of Music degree *honoris causa* by the University of Nebraska. She was honored as the 1988 Performer of the Year by the New York chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Her discography includes music of Bach, Pachelbel, Handel, Mondonville and twenty contemporary composers on Columbia and Musical Heritage Society labels. She is now recording the complete organ music of Johannes Pachelbel for the Musical Heritage Society.

MARILYN MASON, ORGAN

READERS

JANA ROSS

COIT SHARRINGHAUSEN

LAURA STUART

EVAN HERNANDEZ

PROGRAM

Le Chemin de la Croix

The Stations of the Cross

Music by Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)

Poetry by Paul Claudel (1868-1955)

- 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 Cyréne helps Jesus carry the cross**
Jesus' load is lightened by Simon. A 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.

- VII. **Jesus falls a second time**
The weariness of Jesus is shown by the descending seconds in the soprano voice.
- VIII. **Jesus comforts the women of Jerusalem**
The motive of pity is heard first. The voice of Jesus (on the Trompette stop) is then combined with the pity motive.
- IX. **Jesus falls a third time**
A tumultuous 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 at 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 into a rising motive to represent the resurrection.



The readers are University of Evansville theatre students under the direction of Professor Christia Ward of the Department of Theatre.

PROGRAM NOTES

The Stations of the Cross is a series of pictures or tableaux representing scenes in the passion and death of Christ. Each corresponds 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 a pilgrimage (in spirit) to the principal scenes of Christ's passion and death. The devotion is carried out by passing from station to station and meditating on each incident represented in the tableaux. This devotion originated in the Holy Land where the route Christ traveled from the place of sentencing to Calvary has been marked since the earliest years of Christianity. It 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.

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. He wrote the set of fourteen poems, *Le Chemin de la Croix*, in 1911 as part of his *Corona Benignitatis Anni Dei*, a cycle of 56 poems on the liturgical year.

Marcel Dupré enjoyed a worldwide reputation for his organ compositions, brilliant organ playing, extraordinary ability at improvisation, and skill as an organ pedagogue. He studied piano with Louis Diemer and Guilmant, organ with Vierne, and fugue and composition with Widor. He revolutionized the organ concert in 1920 when he performed the complete works of J.S. Bach from memory at a series of concerts in Paris. He toured the United States in 1921 and played 94 recitals in 85 cities. On his second tour in 1923 he performed 110 recitals. In 1939 he made a world concert tour which included a performance on the Milton Z. Tinker Memorial Organ in the Evansville Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Coliseum.

He was organist of the church of Saint Sulpice in Paris from 1934 until his death at age 85. From 1926 to 1954 Dupré was professor of organ at the Paris National Conservatory where his pupils included Alain and Messiaen.

About *Le Chemin de la Croix*, the composer writes:

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 February 13, 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 March 18, 1932.