

A Junior Recital

Maria Kravchenko, organ

April 21, 2007

2:30 pm

University Auditorium

Program

Toccata Prima	G. Frescobaldi (1583-1643)
Four Chorale Preludes	
Christ lag in Todesbanden (I)	G. Boehm (1661-1733)
Christ lag in Todesbanden (II)	G. Boehm
Christ lag in Todesbanden (BWV 718)	J. S. Bach (1685-1750)
Christ lag in Todesbanden	J. Pachelbel (1653-1706)
<i>Suite Médiévale</i>	J. Langlais (1907-1991)
I. Prélude	
II. Tiento	
V. Acclamations	
Andante	W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)
<i>La Nativité du Seigneur</i>	O. Messiaen (1908-1992)
IX. Dieu parmi nous	

Program Notes

Toccata Prima is the first piece in Girolamo Frescobaldi's *First Book of Toccatas and Partitas*. As was common in early Baroque keyboard music, it can be played on either harpsichord or organ. It is highly sectionalized, because Frescobaldi meant for the performer to be able to choose how much of the toccata to play, and which parts. In a style typical of the early 17th century, there are many fast, scalar passages and meter changes.

A chorale prelude is a setting of a chorale (a Lutheran hymn) for solo organ. Usually, the chorale is in AAB form, where the first two lines (A) are repeated with different text. Chorale preludes can range from simple harmonizations to virtuosic pieces. The chorale preludes played here are four different settings of the Easter chorale **Christ lag in Todesbanden** (Christ lay in Death's strong bonds).

The first two preludes were both written by Georg Boehm, but illustrate two completely different styles. The first prelude is sectional, with each phrase of the chorale given a different treatment, from the fugal material at the beginning to the dance-like rhythm at the end. There are several meter shifts in the course of the work.

The second prelude is an illustration of the style known as an *ornamented chorale*, which consists of a solo voice, usually in the soprano, playing an ornamented version of the chorale tune. The solo is accompanied by pedal and flutes, which play the harmony.

The next chorale prelude, written by J.S. Bach, is unusual in many ways. It is through-composed, with a number of compositional styles showcased within a relatively short work. Some of the techniques include solo melody against an ostinato-ritornello bass, development of the melody in triplets, and a statement-echo technique reminiscent of the north German chorale fantasia. Some sections of the chorale show the influence of Boehm and Pachelbel, suggesting that the prelude is one written early in Bach's career.

The final chorale prelude, by Johann Pachelbel, is in a style typical of Pachelbel's chorale preludes. It is in two sections, and begins with a harmonization and polyphonic treatment of the chorale melody. The second section consists of running scalar passages in the upper voices, with a cantus firmus in the tenor. The tenor line is doubled by the bass, in order to bring out the melody more clearly.

Jean Langlais was a blind French organist and composer. In his organ works, he followed the tradition of Tournemire. A quarter of his works are based on Gregorian melodies and enhanced by polymodal harmonies. Almost all of his music is religious. *Suite Médiévale*, written in 1947, is one of the works based on Gregorian melodies. The first movement, the Prélude, is also reminiscent of Notre Dame organum, with numerous passages consisting of parallel fourths and fifths. The second movement, the Tiento, has a canonical treatment of the melody in the manuals, while the pedal plays the actual chant tune. This movement also illustrates the organ stop called the Vox Humana. The final movement, Acclamations, is an improvisation-like treatment of a short fragment of a chant, marked "Christus vincit" (Christ conquers).

Although Mozart referred to the organ as the "King of Instruments," he wrote very little music for it. A number of his existing organ works were written for the mechanical organ, or flute clock. The Andante is one of these. The dynamic markings indicated allow for a performer to showcase the various kind of flutes available.

Olivier Messiaen, one of the most important composers of the twentieth century, was well known as an organist and composer. Many of his organ works are meditations on various portions of the Roman Catholic faith, which Messiaen held very deeply. His trademark compositional techniques include a unique system of tonality and the use of rhythmic units. *La Nativité*, a set of meditations for organ, shows the importance of rhythm in Messiaen's music. The final movement, "Dieu parmi nous" (God with us), is an immense movement divided into an introduction and a toccata. The introduction can be further divided into two distinct sections. The first line represents the "formidable descent from Heaven to Earth," while the next line represents the "sweetness of union with Jesus Christ." The fast passages which follow represent the "exultation of the heart." The remainder of the introduction is a development on these three themes. The second half of the movement is a toccata. The rapid alternation of chords between the hands is in the tradition of the French organist-composers.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music degree. Maria is from the studio of Dr. Laura Ellis.