

School of Music presents

A Junior Recital

Matt Gender, Organ

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

7:30PM

University Auditorium

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| from <i>Nouveau Livre de Noëls</i><br>VIII. Noël Étranger<br>XII. Noël Suisse | Louis-Claude Daquin (1694-1772) |
| from <i>Das Orgelbüchlein</i><br>O Mensch, bewein dein' Sünde gross, BWV 622  | J.S. Bach (1685-1750)           |
| Fuga in G-Dur, BWV 577  | J.S. Bach                       |
| Prélude, Fugue, et Variation, op. 18  | César Franck (1822-1890)        |
| Le banquet céleste  | Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)    |
| Toccata   | John Weaver (b.1937)            |

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*Mr. Gender's recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music degree in Organ Performance. Mr. Gender is from the organ studio of Dr. Laura Ellis.*

As a virtuoso organist and composer, the published repertory of **Louis-Claude Daquin** stands as window through which modern organists view earlier Baroque organ writing, especially that of the French school. Daquin was a famous child prodigy; after performing before the court of Louis XIV at age six, he conducted his own choral work *Beatus vir* at the age of eight. As a church organist, he worked at many locations; most notably the cathedral of *Notre Dame de Paris* starting in 1755. The two performed tonight are the most famous of Daquin's twelve "noels;" (Christmas pieces), making large use of the organ's *Krummhorn* stop (a Medieval reed instrument). The "noel" genre stemmed from the singing of music at pre-Christian festivals, most notably Christmas. During the era of plainchant (9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries), these pieces started off as plainchant repertory, and then garnered secular tunes, texts, and usages. Published in 1757 as mostly the product of improvisation, Daquin follows structures similar to Gigault (1683), Lebègue (1685), and other French Baroque musicians.

Perhaps one of the most famous of all organ repertoires is that of **J.S. Bach**, who worked as a church musician for most of his life. This fugue is nicknamed "the Jig" because of its quick compound quadruple (12/8) meter, a classic meter for the English dance genre. The Jig fugue

represents one of the more light-hearted fugues composed for organ. The piece contains a total of eleven statements of the fugue subject distributed throughout the fugue's four voices. *O Mensch, beweine dein' Sünde* gross is a chorale prelude for organ, based on a Lenten chorale tune that Bach expanded upon. It translates to "O Man, weep for your great sin;" the somber mood of the chorale's text is reflected in Bach's treatment of dissonance, and usage of text painting.

The High Romantic period holds an important place for all genres of music especially the organ. The symphonist **César Franck** worked as the organist for *St. Clotilde* church in France and as an organ professor at the *Paris Conservatoire* during this musically important time. Although comparatively small, the organ output of César Franck represents some of the most important romantic works for the genre, especially because of the highly symphonic nature of their writing. Franck, known for his symphonic registrations and use of the organ as a symphonic instrument (not only as a solo instrument but also as an ensemble instrument within the orchestra), published this piece in a collection of organ pieces in 1860-62. The work is divided into three major sections and one smaller connecting passage. The Prélude (first movement) states the theme in the soprano voice, utilizing the *Hautbois* stop in the Swell. The connecting passage is in chorale form, with highly chromatic voice leading; and floats gracefully into the Fugue (second movement) again more in choral form but showing distinct fugal characteristics. The final movement, the Variation, utilizes a fast-moving accompaniment in the left hand to supplement the first solo theme.

French organ music in the twentieth century is punctuated by experimentation, improvisation and marked tonality shifts. It is this time period that **Olivier Messiaen** composed his greatest works for organ, orchestra, voice, and string quartet; working as the organist at *La Trinité* church in Paris. Messiaen's organ music reflects his passion for birds and ornithology, as well as his condition known as *synesthesia*. It is because Messiaen associated certain colors and patterns with chords and tones that his writing uses dissonant and exotic chord structures. Also heavily influenced by the ideals of Catholic Mysticism, Messiaen writes with a joyous view of Christianity and Catholicism (evident in *Apparition of the Eternal Church* and the *Nativity of Our Lord*). This piece, among the first he published (in 1928), is based on the "Celestial Banquet," a.k.a. communion (from the score: "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood will remain in me and I in him"). The main melody is stated in the pedal as slow eighth notes, symbolizing drops of water.

**John Weaver** is the former chair of the organ department at Julliard and former Director of Music at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York. As a concert artist, Dr. Weaver travels widely and performs many recitals all across the nation and abroad, often with his own compositions! This wonderful toccata showcases the Andrew Anderson Memorial pipe organ's rich full *plenum* sound, including principals, flutes, mixtures, and reeds. The opening section, entirely in triplets, starts with a lively fanfare that introduces the main theme. After the opening section is juxtaposed with softer lyrical sections that traverse almost every key area, an aria-like second theme appears in the soprano voice. A final return of triumphant fanfare material closes the composition with simple yet fiery musicality.

*Program Notes by Matt Gender*