

Zach Klobnak, organ  
Graduate Recital  
Friday, January 23, 2009  
University Auditorium  
7:30 p.m.

- Program -

- Fanfare John Cook (1918-1984)
- Partite diverse sopra il Corale "Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig,"* BWV 768 Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
- 6<sup>ème</sup> Sonate, Opus 86* Félix-Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)  
I. Allegro con fuoco  
II. Meditation  
III. Fugue et Adagio
- Trois Préludes et Fugues, Opus 7* Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)  
III. G mineur
- Répons pour le Temps de Pâques* Jeanne Demessieux (1921-1968)
- Flores del Desierto* (Tangos for Organ) Pamela Decker (b. 1955)  
I. Albarda

- Program Notes -

Englishman John Cook wrote his *Fanfare* in 1951 for a pageant at the Hampton Court Palace in Surrey. The work, which features the *trompette-en-chamade*, is prefaced with verses from Psalm 81:

Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm and bring hither a timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

Cook studied at Cambridge University under renowned British organists Boris Ord and Sir David Willcocks, and was organist of the parish church in Strafford-on-Avon. He later settled in North America where he held posts at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Ontario, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Boston's Church of the Advent.

Johann Sebastian Bach's partita on *Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig* is among the most important of Baroque chorale partitas and marks an end in the development of the genre. Bach opens the partita with a four-part harmonization of the chorale melody followed by eleven variations in which he geniously finds new ways to set the *cantus firmus*. Bach's treatment of the variations often take the form of other styles common to standard organ repertory—*bicinium*, *basse de trompette*, trio sonata, as well as popular Baroque keyboard dance types

such as the *sarabande*. It seems quite plausible that the work was completed in two stages as the early variations are for manuals only and could be performed on harpsichord. The later variations increase in complexity and include pedal. The partita is uniquely suited to highlight the many colors and tones of the instrument.

The three pieces on tonight's program by French composers show a Parisian pedagogical lineage dating from the late nineteenth century to the mid twentieth century. Félix-Alexandre Guilmant was named Organ Professor at the Paris Conservatory in 1896, succeeding Charles-Marie Widor who had moved within the conservatory to teach composition. Widor held close ties to the organ class, however, because a condition of Guilmant's appointment was that Louis Vierne remain as his assistant; Vierne served as a tie between the two men. Marcel Dupré entered the Paris Conservatory in 1904 and studied with all three—organ with Guilmant and Vierne, composition with Widor. Dupré later became Organ Professor at the conservatory and in 1939 admitted the young, virtuosic child prodigy Jeanne Demessieux to his organ class. Demessieux studied with Dupré until their relationship unfortunately went sour in 1949.

Because of the unique nature of Guilmant and Widor's relationship, as well as the length and degree of their influence, they are considered the founders of the late-nineteenth-century French Romantic Organ School. While Widor is remembered as a great organ symphonist, Guilmant's compositions often hold tight to solid traditional styles within classically oriented structures and balanced proportions. His 6<sup>ème</sup> *Sonate* is no exception as the first movement is in a strict sonata-allegro form with clear exposition, development, and recapitulation sections. The structure and balanced nature of the fugue from the third movement also shows Guilmant's exacting and classical character. Written in Meudon in September 1897, Guilmant dedicated the piece as follows, "to my friend Charles-Marie Widor."

Marcel Dupré wrote his *Trois Préludes et Fugues* early in his compositional career while a student in Widor's composition class. Dupré believed they were too difficult for modern performers and was certain they would be forgotten; however, they remain some of the most popular pieces in his *oeuvre*. The G minor prelude and fugue is dedicated to the memory of Joseph Boulnois, a fallen soldier and organist. The prelude—marked *vivace*—features fast, playful figuration on flutes that accompany a haunting melody, which is first heard in the pedal, then in the hands, and finally ends with the melody harmonized in seven- or eight-part chords (sometimes the feet taking 4 notes!). The fugue is in the style of a jig and the subject contains what has come to be known as Dupré's signature tune: "Marcel Dupré, Marcel Dupré, what did you play, what did you play? . . ." The chorale-like melody from the prelude is again present in the fugue and presented in the same manner as before—pedal, manual, harmonized form.

The *Répons pour le Temps de Pâques* (Response for the Time of Easter) of Jeanne Demessieux is a fantasia for organ based on three Gregorian chants from the Easter mass: *Ite, misse est* (Dismissal), *Victimae paschali laudes* (Sequence), and *Resurrexit* (Introit). The piece was written during the last year of her life and published posthumously in 1970. Improvisatory in nature, the piece actually has a balanced ABA structure in which Demessieux juxtaposes toccata- and chorale-like writing that treats the chants both individually and in combination. It concludes with a *pianissimo* section of profound tranquility. Demessieux's use of bitonality throughout seems to be making bold statements that reflect the mystery of the resurrection celebrated during the time of Easter.

Pamela Decker is Professor of Organ and Music Theory at the University of Arizona and serves as organist at Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Tucson. She holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ

performance, with emphasis also in composition, from Stanford University. During her doctoral study she was awarded a Fulbright Grant for study of organ and composition in Lübeck, West Germany. She maintains an active career as composer, performer, professor, and church musician. Decker provides the following notes for this piece:

*Flores del Desierto* was commissioned by Janice Beck in 1998 and premiered, also by Janice Beck, in 1999. The request was for three concert tango pieces that would show the influence of Argentinean tango composers such as Astor Piazzolla. The title means “desert wildflowers,” and each piece is named after a type of desert flower. *Albarda* (or *ocotillo*) is a flamboyant plant with long, thorny, wand-like stems bearing clusters of waxy red-orange flowers. Each flower has five petals. Blooming times are usually synchronous with hummingbird migrations. The albarda is a striking plant by itself, but when it is visited by flocks of colorful hummingbirds, the effect of movement and color is extravagant. In this first piece of the set, an active theme drives a lively, quick tango with a *marcato* bass line. Punctuating rhythms in characteristic tango patterns are supplied by the left hand part. There is a central, lyrical section based upon the inversion of the primary theme or motive. The work is concluded with a recurrence of the opening dance, except that the lively theme becomes increasingly embellished and ornamented.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree.

Zach Klobnak is from the studio of Dr. Laura Ellis.