



THE KATHLEEN UPTON BYRNS McCLENDON ORGAN
DEDICATION RECITAL

Sunday, February 8, 2009, at 4:00 pm in Duke University Chapel

Robert Parkins, *University Organist*

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| Prelude and Fugue in A Minor | Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) |
| Canzone (from the Symphonic Chorale <i>Jesu, meine Freude</i>) | Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933) |
| Toccata in D Minor, Op. 59, No. 5 | Max Reger (1873-1916) |
| Prélude, Op. 29, No. 1 | Gabriel Pierné (1863-1937) |
| Pastorale, Op. 19 | César Franck (1822-1890) |
| Toccata | Eugène Gigout (1844-1925) |
| From <i>Rubrics</i> : | Dan Locklair (b. 1949) |
| II. "Silence may be kept." | |
| IV. "The peace may be exchanged." | |
| V. "The people respond - Amen!" | |

–*Intermission*–

David Arcus, *Associate University Organist*

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| Improvisation on the <i>Te Deum</i> | Charles Tournemire (1870-1939) Reconstructed by Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986) |
| Chorale (from <i>Quatre Pièces</i>), Op. 37 | Joseph Jongen (1873-1953) |
| From <i>Three Psalm Preludes</i> , Op. 32: | Herbert Howells (1892-1983) |
| No. 1: This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. (<i>Ps. 34, v. 8</i>) | |
| No. 2: But the meek shall possess the land, and delight themselves in abundant prosperity. (<i>Ps. 37, v. 11</i>) | |
| From <i>Pièces de Fantaisie</i> , Op. 53: | Louis Vierne (1870-1937) |
| Hymn au soleil, No. 3 | |
| Clair de lune, No. 5 | |
| Pageant | Leo Sowerby (1895-1968) |
| Improvisation on a submitted theme | |

Please reserve applause until the end of each half of the program.

PROGRAM NOTES

Johannes Brahms's **Prelude and Fugue in A Minor**, ostensibly his first essay in organ composition, was sent to Clara Schumann as a gift to celebrate his own birthday in 1856. What it might lack in maturity and polish, it more than makes up for in youthful energy and impetuosity, but not at the expense of experimentation with time-honored contrapuntal devices. The fugue subject, already foreshadowed in the pedal line of the brief prelude, appears also in inversion (upside down) just before it is transformed by augmentation (lengthened note values). As in many of Bach's early preludes and fugues, Brahms's counterpoint dissolves toward the end into the free style of the prelude, and the final statement of the subject is nearly buried under a furious flurry of notes

Sigfrid Karg-Elert, Max Reger's successor at the Leipzig Conservatory, is known by organists chiefly as the composer of *66 Chorale Improvisations* (especially the *Marche triomphale* on *Nun danket alle Gott*). Among his other pieces for organ are *Three Symphonic Chorales*, Op. 87, the second of which – based on *Jesu, meine Freude* (No. 532 in the pew hymnal) – includes a hauntingly lovely **Canzone** as the middle movement. Simple and almost neoclassical in texture, it avoids the kaleidoscopic dynamic and registration changes one usually expects from Karg-Elert.

Reger's **Toccata in D Minor** comes from a set of twelve organ pieces written in 1901. In contrast to the perpetual-motion toccata, this composition harks back to the more mercurial multisectonal works of the pre-Bach era. Shorter and less dense or complex than many of Reger's free organ works, it nonetheless exploits the dramatic shifts of texture, color, and dynamic level typical at the turn of the 20th century.

In 1890 Gabriel Pierné succeeded his teacher César Franck as organist at Ste. Clotilde in Paris, and he was followed eight years later by Charles Tournemire. Pierné's compositional output for organ is modest, but his **Prélude** in G Minor (the first of three pieces in Op. 29) has assumed its place as a staple of the French Romantic organ repertoire.

Franck, Belgian by birth but spending most of his professional life in Paris, left a dozen great works for organ. His **Pastorale** is the fourth in a set of *Six pièces* published in 1862. Its ternary form resembles that of many Romantic pastorales, a peaceful opening leading to a stormy middle section that eventually subsides with a return to the mood – and thematic material – of the beginning.

Eugène Gigout, organist at the Church of St. Augustin in Paris for 62 years, was (like Franck) also a professor of organ and improvisation at the Paris Conservatory. His famous **Toccata** in B Minor (from *Dix pièces*, 1892), was actually recorded by the composer himself in 1912 on a Welte-Mignon roll.

American composer and organist Dan Locklair, a faculty member at Wake Forest University, has written a substantial number of attractive and effective pieces for organ, including *The Aeolian Sonata* (commissioned to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Duke's instrument just seven years ago). **Rubrics**, published in 1988 and quickly becoming Locklair's most popular organ work, is a "liturgical suite" in five movements inspired by services from *The Book of Common Prayer*. Performed today are the two softer and more lyrical movements followed by the exuberant finale.

–Robert Parkins

Charles Tournemire was one of the most significant composers and teachers in France at the beginning of the 20th century. Tournemire distinguished himself through his improvisations for the liturgy of the Mass. His *L'orgue mystique* contains movements that were typical of his improvisations for the Mass. His student Maurice Duruflé wrote down by dictation from recordings five of Tournemire's improvisations, including the *Te Deum*. The tonal design and qualities of the Aeolian organ, while not typical of the French organs with which Tournemire was familiar, accommodates the drama and registration requirements to excellent effect.

Joseph Jongen was one of the most celebrated Belgian composers of the early 20th century. He wrote for a great variety of media throughout his life and also taught at the conservatories in Liège and Brussels. Jongen's **Chorale** from *Quatre Pièces*, Op. 37, is less well known than his virtuosic *Sonata eroïca* and the *Symphonie concertante* for organ and orchestra but is nonetheless deserving of repeated hearings. Chorale begins as a lyrical air for the organ's quiet foundations and gradually grows to full organ, maintaining its noble qualities throughout. The music demonstrates the Aeolian organ's capacity to produce a seamless crescendo through judicious voicing and careful manipulation of the expression pedals for the Swell, Choir, and Solo divisions.

The Aeolian organ is highly effective for early 20th-century English cathedral organ music and, particularly, the Psalm Preludes of Herbert Howells. Although highly regarded for his church music, Howells earned acclaim in the United States, especially for his unaccompanied motet *Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing*, written following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Howells wrote the first set of Psalm Preludes around the time he was diagnosed with Graves' disease and given six months to live. These circumstances undoubtedly influenced his selection of psalm verses for the meditative movements of Op. 32. **Preludes 1 and 2** both make thorough use of the Aeolian's tonal resources and expressive qualities, although the score refrains from specific registrations apart from dynamics and occasional octave designations in the pedal.

Louis Vierne was active as a composer and organist (at Notre Dame in Paris for 37 years), in spite of very poor eyesight. He wrote six massive solo organ symphonies over the course of 32 years. In contrast, he composed the four books of *Pièces de Fantaisie* in 1926 and 1927, much of it while on a worldwide concert tour. Unlike Howells, Vierne gave specific registration indications. Still, the tonal possibilities on the Aeolian warrant some tasteful deviations from Vierne's specifications, as his scores were published with French organs in mind. The pieces in Book Two are dedicated to Americans. Ruth M. Conniston, who studied with Vierne in the early 1920s, is the dedicatee of **Hymne au soleil** (Hymn to the Sun). As a rondo with grand movement and heroic rhythm, its "ritornello" (recurring theme) is featured first on the Pedal Trombone, next on the Solo chorus Tubas, and finally with full organ. Vierne dedicated his **Clair de lune** (Moonlight) to American organ builder Ernest M. Skinner. This work features the beautiful Orchestral Flute of the Solo division against strings of the Swell and Choir divisions, tonal staples of Skinner organs.

Leo Sowerby was among the most influential American church musicians of the early 20th century. He served as organist and choirmaster at St. James Church in Chicago before assuming the post of music director at Washington National Cathedral. He frequently incorporated distinctly American traits in his music, particularly in his choice of harmonies. He took the pipe organ to its limits in his organ compositions and, like Vierne, was very specific about his registrations. **Pageant** is based on a heroic theme that recurs in five variations and showcases the organ's Pedal division.

—David Arcus

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Robert Parkins is the University Organist and a Professor of the Practice of Music at Duke University. He first assumed the position of Chapel Organist at Duke in 1975, then joined the faculty of the School of Music at Ithaca College in 1982, returning to Duke in 1985.

A graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the Yale University School of Music, Dr. Parkins studied organ with Gerre Hancock, Charles Krigbaum, and Michael Schneider, and harpsichord with Ralph Kirkpatrick. As a Fulbright scholar he pursued further organ study in Vienna with Anton Heiller.

Dr. Parkins has concertized throughout the United States and Europe as well as in Central America. His organ and harpsichord recordings have appeared on the Calcante, Gothic, Musical Heritage Society, and Naxos labels. Still available are several CDs recorded on the Aeolian, Flentrop, and Brombaugh organs in Duke Chapel, including *Early Iberian Organ Music*, *Brahms: Complete Organ Works*, *German Romantic Organ Music*, *Iberian and South German Organ Music*, and *Organ Music of Frescobaldi*.



David Arcus holds degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and the School of Music at Yale University, where he earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree. As Chapel Organist and Associate University Organist, he participates in nearly 200 services and events annually at Duke University, specializing in service playing and improvisation.

Dr. Arcus has received awards in composition and improvisation competitions, and he is in demand as a solo recitalist, having performed in the United States, Europe, and Great Britain. His Duke Chapel performance during the Flentrop organ's 25th anniversary was hailed by *Classical Voice of North Carolina* as "one of the ten best performances" in 2001. *Fanfare* magazine described his recorded performances as full of "good-natured technique, exalted spirit and pomp, and a genuine affection for his listener." In October 2008, he inaugurated the new Richards, Fowkes & Co. organ for Duke Divinity School.



Dr. Arcus's recitals have included premieres of new works by composers such as Aaron Jay Kernis and Dan Locklair. As a composer, he is frequently commissioned to write new works for organ and choir, and he is also active as a clinician, teacher/lecturer, and conductor. His compositions are published by Concordia, Hinshaw, and Wayne Leupold Editions. His CD, *The Organs of Duke Chapel*, is on the Gothic label.