

ORGAN RECITAL

Derek Remes, organ
Sunday, October 16, 2011
5:00 P.M.

Boe Chapel, St. Olaf College
1520 St. Olaf Avenue
Northfield, MN 55057

Chorale in A Minor

César Franck
(1822-1890)

César Franck was born in Belgium but spent most of his life working in Paris. From a young age, his father pressured him to become a piano virtuoso in the manner of Franz Liszt. While Franck no doubt benefited musically from his father's dominating presence, their relationship suffered.

Franck held successively more important organ positions in Paris until he became *titulaire* of Sainte-Clotilde in 1858, where he remained until his death. Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, the greatest organ builder in France at the time, installed a new three-manual organ soon after Franck's appointment there. Franck is quoted to have said, "If you only knew how I love this instrument . . . it is so supple beneath my fingers and so obedient to all my thoughts!" Franck's compositions were conceived for this particular type of organ, and will forever be linked to the Cavaillé-Coll sound.

It was at Sainte-Clotilde that Franck composed the *Trois Chorales*, his last works. Léon Vallas says, "Their beauty and importance are such that they may be properly considered as a kind of musical last will and testament." The chorale melody itself, heard near the beginning of the piece, is original (unlike "cantus-based" works that incorporate melodic fragments by other composers). It recurs throughout the piece in various contexts - different keys, harmonizations, registrations, etc. - and eventually returns at the end, combined with the rapid passages heard at the beginning of the piece. This is a superb example of compositional "compression," where multiple ideas are combined to be heard simultaneously, often at a climax or as a sort of musical summary.

Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor, BWV 542

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach was one of the greatest organists and composers for organ. This piece is often subtitled "The Great" to distinguish it from another, shorter fugue which is also in G Minor. Bach supposedly wrote the *Fantasia and Fugue* as an audition piece for an organist position in Hamburg, although some scholars believe that the two parts were actually written years apart. Regardless, the two halves share striking similarities, such as a 5-note rising chromatic motive that is used in canon in both pieces.

A fantasia is a free musical form, like a prelude, and is often paired with a more systematic form, such as a fugue. This particular fantasia is extraordinarily chromatic, and was probably intended to showcase the freedoms associated with the new well-tempered tuning system. Only a few keys were useable with earlier tuning systems, but the well-tempered system allowed modulation to any key. The subsequent 4-voice fugue is a stunning example of Bach's contrapuntal technique.

Hymn - The King of Love My Shepherd Is

ST. COLUMBA

all, unison 1. The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness
women, unis. 2. Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed
all, harmony 3. Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in
men, unison 4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill, with thee, dear
organ alone 5. Thou spreadst a ta - ble in my sight; thine un - ction
all, unison 6. And so, through all the length of days, thy good - ness

fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
soul he lead - eth and, where the ver - dant
love he sought me, and on his shoul - der
Lord, be - side me, thy rod and staff my
grace be - stow - eth; and, oh, what trans - ports
fail - eth ne - ver. Good Shep - herd, may I

I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.
pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.
gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.
com - fort still; thy cross be - fore to guide me.s
of de - light from thy pure chal - ice flow - eth!
sing thy praise with - in thy house for - ev - er.

Text: Henry W. Baker 1821-1877
Music: Irish tun

Sweet Hour of Prayer

William Bolcom
(b.1938)

William Bolcom is an American composer and pianist who taught composition at the University of Michigan until 2008. This short piece comes from a set of 16 *Gospel Preludes*. One of Bolcom's goals as a composer has been to bridge the gap between classical and popular music. In *Sweet Hour of Prayer*, gospel harmonies and chromatic counterpoint are combined to create a fresh, yet familiar whole.

The text for *Sweet Hour of Prayer* is as follows:

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!
That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne
Make all my wants and wishes known.
In seasons of distress and grief,
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!
The joys I feel, the bliss I share,
Of those whose anxious spirits burn
With strong desires for thy return!
With such I hasten to the place
Where God my Savior shows His face,
And gladly take my station there,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!
Thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless.
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe His Word and trust His grace,
I'll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!
May I thy consolation share,
Till, from Mount Pisgah's lofty height,
I view my home and take my flight.
This robe of flesh I'll drop, and rise
To seize the everlasting prize,
And shout, while passing through the air,
"Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer!"

Hymn - Father Most Holy

CHRISTE SANCTORUM

unison 1. Fa - ther most ho - ly, mer - ci - ful, and ten - der; Je - sus, our
harmony 2. Trin - i - ty bless - ed, u - ni - ty un - shak - en; good - ness un -
harmony 3. Mak - er of all things, all thy crea - tures praise thee; all for thy
unison 4. Lord God Al - might - y, un - to thee be glo - ry, one in three

Sav - ior, with the Fa - ther reign - ing; Spir - it of com - fort,
 bound - ed, ver - y God of heav - en, light of the an - gels,
 wor - ship were and are cre - at - ed; now, as we al - so
 per - sons, o - ver all ex - alt - ed! Glo - ry we of - fer,

ad - vo - cate, de - fend - der, light nev - er wan - ing.
 joy of those for - sak - en, hope of al liv - ing.
 wor - ship thee de - vout - ly, hear thou our voic - es.
 praise thee and a - dore thee, now and for - ev - er.

Text: Latin hymn, 10th cent.; tr. Percy Dearmer, 1867-1936, alt.
 Music: Paris *Antiphoner*, 1681

Organ Symphony No. 6, Op. 42, No. 2 V. Finale

Charles-Marie Widor
 (1844-1937)

Charles-Marie Widor was born to a musical family with connections to Cavallé-Coll, who helped arrange for his early musical education. At age 25 Widor became organist at St. Sulpice in Paris, which had one of Cavallé-Coll's finest organs, a post he held for 64 years until his student, Marcel Dupré, succeeded him.

In 1890, Widor succeeded Franck as Professor of Organ at the Paris Conservatory. The class he inherited was initially stunned by this new teacher, who suddenly demanded a formidable technique and a knowledge of J.S. Bach's organ works as prerequisites to effective improvisation. (Franck was sometimes criticized for his unsystematic teaching method, which emphasized improvisation over technique.)

This last movement of Widor's 6th symphony is a joyful outburst of G Major. It is cast in sonata-rondo form. A sonata is a piece built on two distinctive themes, while a rondo has one main theme (A) which alternates with others to create the form "ABACADA etc." - this piece shares aspects of both forms.