



EASTMAN
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of ROCHESTER

Department of Organ, Sacred Music, and Historical Keyboards
from the studio of David Higgs

Derek Remeš, organ

Toccata tertia

from *Apparatus musico-organisticus* (1690)

Georg Muffat (1653-1704)

Sonata No. 3 in D minor, BWV 527

- I. Andante
- II. Adagio e dolce
- III. Vivace

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Fugue in A Minor (2013)

Derek Remeš (b. 1986)

Six Studies in Canonic Form for Pedal Piano, Op. 56 (1845)

- I. Nicht zu schnell
- II. Mit innigem Ausdruck
- III. Andantino
- IV. Innig
- V. Nicht zu schnell
- VI. Adagio

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Allegro, Chorale, and Fugue in D Minor (1844)

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

*Tuesday, March 4, 2014, 7:00pm
Christ Church (Episcopal), 141 East Avenue, Rochester, NY*

*Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree in
Performance and Literature*

Special thanks to my teacher, David Higgs, registrants Angela Salcedo and Sarah Simko, Laura Norris and those who helped with the reception, and to Amanda Mole for helping to schedule Christ Church time

Refreshments will be served following the concert in the sacristy (through the door on the right side in the front of the church).

The cosmopolitan musician Georg Muffat combined various national styles in his *Apparatus musico-organisticus*, a collection of twelve toccatas and various other keyboard works printed in 1690. Muffat was born in Savoy, France, and studied in Paris in the 1660s, although he worked primarily in German-speaking lands, ultimately settling in Passau. He also visited Rome between 1681 and 1682, where he interacted with Bernardo Pasquini and Arcangelo Corelli.

Italian influences pervade the *Apparatus*, most notably through the use of five-line staves, *groppi* (Italian main-note trills), textures in the *durezza e ligature* style, and themes evoking the *canzona francese*. The French style shows itself most clearly in the ornamentation. While the *Apparatus* leaves many questions regarding the performance of ornaments, Muffat's *Florilegium secundum* (a collection of orchestral suites, published in 1698) illustrates French ornamentation more clearly with written-out examples. This source is one of the earliest of German origin in which the trill begins on upper note.

Muffat's multi-sectional **Toccata tertia** opens in the improvisatory style of a Venetian toccata, at the same time incorporating elements of the *style brisé*, or the broken, arpeggiated manner of lute playing. The second section, here registered on positive flutes 8', 4' and 2', makes use of canonic imitation at the fifth and the octave. The fourth section, marked *adagio*, evokes an Italian elevation toccata, which would have been played as the priest elevated the host during the Catholic mass. Lombardic (short-long) figures in this section recall the hammer blows as Jesus was nailed to the cross.

The autograph manuscript of Johann Sebastian Bach's six trio sonatas bears a watermark suggesting a date between 1727-1731, but scholars believe the handwriting corresponds most closely to the year 1730. According to George Stauffer, the sonatas reflect Bach's concentrated involvement with chamber music in Cöthen and subsequent re-imagining of organ music in Leipzig as imitative of instrumental music. This new role of the organ as chamber instrument is evidenced by the use of lighter, dance-like meters such as 12/8, 6/8, 3/8, and 2/4. Bach uses the straightforward **C** meter in the trio sonatas only twice in 18 movements, and both movements are derived from earlier pieces. The six trio sonatas were supposedly written as practice pieces for Bach's eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann. In contrast, the *Orgel-Büchlein*, an earlier instructional set from Weimar, has 42 of 46 chorale preludes in the conservative **C** or 3/2 meters.

The *galant* style of the sonatas appealed to the younger generation of composers, as evidenced by the sonatas' wide distribution in Germany, Austria and England in the second half of the eighteenth century. The sonatas were championed in particular by Bach's sons Wilhelm Friedemann and Carl Philipp Emanuel. C.P.E. Bach sent a copy to Forkel, the author of Bach's seminal biography, writing, "The 6 Clavier Trios are among the best works of my late father. They still sound very good and give me great pleasure, even though they are over 50 years old."

Melodic material in the sonatas is organized into succinct, balanced phrases, representing a move away from the Baroque *Fortspinnung*, or "spinning out" of melodies and towards the periodic phrasing of the Classical period. Many of the themes are composed of small, cadentially closed phrases of two, four, or eight measures, suggesting an origin in dance music. The use of slurs is borrowed from string music. Bach returned to the second movement of the **Trio Sonata No. 3 in D Minor** in the 1730s, adding a fourth part and transforming it into the middle movement of the Concerto in A Minor for Violin, Flute, Harpsichord and Strings, BWV 1044, suggesting again the instrumental nature of the trio sonatas. However, invertible counterpoint, a technique not generally associated with the Classical period, is employed throughout the sonatas. In fact, all the modulatory episodes of the aforementioned movement are

precise canons. Bach therefore seems to have integrated and assimilated the new *galant* style into his own practices, rather than resorting to mere imitation.

The **Fugue in A Minor** was first performed by the composer in December, 2013 as part of Professor Edoardo Bellotti's improvisation class. The goal was to compose a *stile antico* fugue subject that could be used in stretto at various intervals while maintaining the same countersubject throughout. The four stretti used in this piece thus proceed from two measures to one measure, then to the half measure in inversion, culminating in stretto between the prime and inverted subjects and countersubject over the final tonic pedal *supplementum*, tonicizing the subdominant.

Robert Schumann recognized Bach to be his most profound musical influence. Schumann founded the Bach-Gesellschaft to mark the centenary of Bach's death, which was dedicated to publishing a complete edition of Bach's works. Beginning in 1845, Schumann, together with his wife Clara, embarked on an intensive course of contrapuntal studies. Schumann called his obsession with counterpoint his *Fugenpassion*. In Bach's *Clavierübung* setting of "Vater unser im Himmelreich," Schumann bracketed every instance of canon, and in a letter written to Clara, Schumann wrote how he conceived of "almost everything canonically," and that "the canonic spirit" pervaded all of his "fantasizing."

Robert and Clara also rented a pedal piano in 1845, its main purpose to practice organ music. However, Robert soon saw the pedal piano for its compositional potential, writing, "When it [the piano] is equipped with a pedalboard, as on the organ, new directions emerge for the composer, who, liberating himself increasingly from a supporting orchestra, learns to maneuver more richly, more independently, in a more full-bodied manner." The **Six Studies in Canonic Form for Pedal Piano, Op. 56** are the fruits of this year of contrapuntal work. Since the purpose of writing for the pedal piano was to achieve an expanded tonal palette, Op. 56 is well suited for reinterpretation at the organ, despite the set's pianistic nature.

Schumann said Mendelssohn "first renewed Germany's awareness of Bach," (perhaps most notably through his revival of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in 1829) and that Mendelssohn "sees more clearly than others through the contradictions of our time and is the first to reconcile them." Mendelssohn demonstrates this unique capacity in his **Allegro, Chorale, and Fugue in D Minor**, which William Little describes as Mendelssohn's "most significant statement for organ." The fugue, drawing its subject from the final phrase of the chorale (which is not borrowed, but original), is a clear reference to the contrapuntal tradition of Bach; even the opening *allegro* employs fugato and stretto techniques. But the counterpoint in the fugue is not as strict as Bach's, with parts that cross, disappear and reappear in the middle of a phrase. Despite the tendency to looseness of Mendelssohn's fugal structures, Little notes that Mendelssohn "gravitated toward fugal writing almost intuitively." Akin to Bach, in his personal adaptation of the emerging *galant* style, Mendelssohn seems to have integrated elements the older contrapuntal tradition into his own style of Romanticism.

Derek Remeš graduated from Berklee College of Music in 2010 with degrees in Composition and Film Scoring. He began studying organ in 2011 with Dr. Catherine Rodland at St. Olaf College, and served as the 2011-12 organ scholar at St. Louis King of France in St. Paul, MN under Choirmaster and Organist Brian Carson. Mr. Remeš was a recipient of the 2013 Peter B. Knock Memorial Music Award, and placed second at the 2013 Albert Schweitzer Organ Competition, where he tied for the hymn playing competition. He serves as Choir Director and Organist at St. Thomas More church in Rochester, NY.