

MUSIQUE RELIGIEUSE

Spencerville Evensong Series

DIVINE DUOS

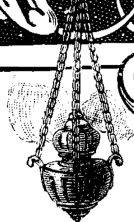
Sacred works for two choirs and "organs"

SEB. BACH

P. PALESTRINA



23 March
4 p.m.



PROGRAM

I.

Messe Solennelle in E Minor, Op. 16

Louis Victor Jules Vierne
(1870 – 1937)

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.

Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy,
Lord have mercy.

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax hominibus
bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te. Benedictimus te.
Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi
propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Glory to God in the highest.
And on earth peace to
men of good will.
We praise you. We bless you.
We worship you. We glorify you.
We give you thanks
because of your great glory.

Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe
Domine Deus, Angus Dei,
Filius Patris.

Lord God, King of Heaven,
God the Father almighty.
The only begotten Son, Jesus Christ
Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father.

Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
Suscipe deprecationem nostrum.
Qui sedes
 ad dexteram Patris,
Miserere nobis.

Who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
Who takes away the sins of the world,
receive our supplication.
You who sits
 at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy upon us.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus.
Tu solus Dominus.
Tu solus Altissimus,
 Jesu Christe,
Cum Sancto Spiritu.
in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen

You alone are holy.
You alone are the Lord.
You alone are the Most High,
 Jesus Christ,
With the Holy Spirit
in the glory of the God the Father.
Amen.

Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domine.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Blessed is the one who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi:
miserere nobis.

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world:
have mercy upon us.

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi:
dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.

II.

Cantus Missae in E flat, Op. 109

Josef Gabriel Rheinberger
(1839 – 1901)

Kyrie
Gloria
Sanctus

Pro Musica of Washington Adventist University

Faire Is The Heaven

William Henry Harris
(1883 – 1973)

Faire is the heaven where happy soules have place
In full enjoyment of felicitie;
Whence they do still behold the glorious face
Of the Divine, Eternall Majestie;

Yet farre more faire be those bright Cherubins
Which all with golden wings are overdight (covered).
And those eternall burning Seraphins
Which from their faces dart out fiery light;

Yet fairer than they both and much more bright
Be the Angels and Archangels
Which attend on God's owne person without rest or end.
These then in faire each other farre excelling
As to the Highest they approach more neare,
Yet is that Highest farre beyond all telling

Fairer than all the rest which there appeare
Though all their beauties joynd together were;
How then can mortal tongue hope to expresse
The image of such endlesse perfectnesse?

Edmund Spenser (1553 – 1599)

INTERMISSION

III.

Tu es Petrus, Op. 29 No. 2

Charles-Marie Jean Albert Widor
(1844 – 1937)

Tu es Petrus,
et super hanc petram
edificabo ecclesiam meam.
Et portae inferi
non prevalebunt versus eam.
Et tibi dabo
claves regni coelorum.

You are Peter,
and upon this rock
I shall build my church.
And the gates of hell
shall not prevail against it.
And I shall give to you
the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

St. Matthew 16:18, 19

Esquisse Byzantine: No. 10 *Tu es Petra (Thou art the Rock)*

Henri Mulet
(1878 – 1967)

IV.

Symphony No. 3 “Organ,” *Poco Adagio*

Charles Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835 – 1921)

IV.

Messe à Deux Choeurs et Deux Orgues

Charles-Marie Widor

Kyrie
Gloria
Sanctus
Benedictus
Agnus Dei

Symphony for Organ No. 5, Toccata

Sing!

Charles-Marie Widor
Arr. David Valentine Willcocks
(b. 1919)

Sing we praise to God, who reigns above;
God, the fount of love; friend, protector, guide;
Ever by our side;
Let us all our voices raise
And sing to God a joyous hymn of praise.
Sing praise, hallelujah, sing praise.

David Willcocks

PERFORMERS

Spencerville Sanctuary Choir and Friends
Columbia Collegiate Chorale of Washington Adventist University
Pro Musica of Washington Adventist University

James Bingham, director

New England Youth Ensemble of Washington Adventist University

Preston Hawes, director

Mark Willey, organ

NOTES

At the dawn of the 19th century, musical life in Paris was centered around the Salle Favert and the productions of the Opéra-Comique. Performances took place on most evenings of the week and, in the early part of the century, fully a third of the subscriptions were held by the aristocracy. Despite the implications of word “comic” in the name, the productions covered a wider category of works, from Bizet to Berlioz to Massenet. No matter the productions being staged, the focus was definitely entertainment and in particular, the entertainment of the wealthy, upper classes. The influence of the Opéra-Comique extended beyond the walls of the Salle Favert. The church music of Paris during the middle of the nineteenth century was dominated by the peculiar vulgarities and sentimentalities associated with its contemporary opera. Both the clergy and some of the less discriminating organists of the time (most prominently Lefébure-Wély) accepted and even fostered this state of affairs, seeing it as a means of attracting the masses, especially the wealthy, to church. Camille Saint-Saëns wrote of an occasion from his days as an organist at La Madeleine:

“One day a vicar of the parish tried to make me understand the point of view of the public at La Madeleine. He emphasized that the public basically consisted of rich people, who were devoted followers of the presentations of the Opéra-Comique. It was therefore necessary to respect their taste in music. ‘Monsieur l’Abbé,’ I replied, ‘when I hear sermons coming from the pulpit in the style of the dialogue at the Opéra-Comique, then I will play music in a similar vein—but not before.’”

In 1841, a young organ builder, Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, still in his 20’s, built his first large instrument for the Basilica of St. Denis, France. This instrument incorporated a number of significant technological innovations. Higher wind pressures made possible a greater number of foundation stops and more powerful reeds, giving these organs a richness of foundation sound, and a crown of fiery sonic power that had been previously impossible on an organ. A young English inventor and organbuilder, Charles Barker, contributed to these developments with his ingenious invention of a pneumatic lever device to assist the keyboard action, enabling the player to engage the full forces of the organ while the touch of the keyboards remained as light as a modern piano. During an illustrious career as the most significant organ builder of the 19th century, Cavaillé-Coll built and rebuilt most of the organs in the major churches of Paris: La Madeleine (1846), Saint-Sulpice (1862) and Notre Dame (1868) being among the most well known. The instruments he installed in these major churches would be the inspiration for several generations of organists who began to think of the organ as not merely a

humble keyboard instrument, but as a veritable symphony. Thus, the “symphonic” organ tradition of France was born and would thrive for the next half a century.

Cavaillé-Coll’s contributions to the improvement of church music weren’t limited to his work as an organ builder. He exerted his growing influence to arrange for two of the most promising young Parisian organists, Alexandre Guilmant and Charles-Marie Widor to study with Belgian organist Nicolas Jacques Lemmens, then the leading interpreter of the organ works of J.S. Bach. Guilmant and Widor, upon returning to Paris from the Brussels Conservatory, would become leaders in the revival of sacred music and would influence a generation of musicians through their work as educators and church musicians.

In 1870, Widor was installed as the *titulaire* organist (main organist) of Saint-Sulpice, a post he held for sixty-four years. The organ of St. Sulpice, newly rebuilt and enlarged by Cavaillé-Coll, was one of the finest and largest organs in Paris. It’s five manuals and 105 ranks would inspire Widor (and later Marcel Dupré) to a lifetime of magnificent organ compositions. It was the inspiration not only to Widor, but to the Assistants he employed during his tenure. One of those, Louis Vierne, who spent eight years with Widor at Saint-Sulpice, was inspired to write his first organ symphony by the rich and diverse sonorities of Cavaillé-Coll’s magnum opus. In 1899, during his last year as Assistant Organist at St. Sulpice, Vierne also penned his *Messe Solennelle* in C-sharp minor. St. Sulpice, like many of the larger Parisian churches, had an *orgues de chœurs* (choir organ) at the front of the nave, near the altar, where the choir would sing for the services. This instrument, enlarged in 1857 by Cavaillé-Coll, while smaller than the *Grandes Orgues* in the balcony at the rear of the nave, was nevertheless a fully developed instrument, capable of colorful choral accompaniment. With his *Messe Solennelle*, Vierne makes effective use of the antiphonal capabilities offered by these two organs and choir, punctuating the choral statements that would have been sung from the front, with *tutti* statements from the large organ at the back. For the concert this afternoon, we have only a single organ at our disposal. The registrations have been designed to impart some of the antiphonal character of this composition.

Saint-Sulpice, the official Parish of Paris Catholic Church, is a massive baroque structure with a curious Neoclassic West front added sometime later to the building. It was affiliated with the main seminary of Paris, which stood on the adjoining square, and the presence of a choir of two hundred seminarians added a uniqueness to its worship services. The availability of this seminarian choir, combined with the two Cavaillé-Coll organs and the professional choir of forty men and boys, trained by the *Maître de Chapelle* must have been a tempting combination for Widor. In 1878, he composed a service using all of these forces. For this afternoon’s concert, in the absence of two organs, the choir organ part has been orchestrated by conductor James Bingham to be played by the full orchestra.

The music of these two masses is grand, even opulent, but, as was its intent, totally arresting. The music focuses on the worship of the Most High God as might be depicted in the Book of Revelation. However, it also attracts the attention of those more earth-bound and moves the soul to ponder the majesty of the Omnipotent. It is accessible music, joyous and moving but music whose primary purpose is that of lending splendor to the liturgy of the worship service. It was not conceived as music for sacred concerts, though it serves that role well. The various movements of the masses are short relative to concert masses, so as not to extend the liturgy to an inconvenient length.

Of a more conservative nature, is the music of Joseph Rheinberger who wrote his *Cantus Missae* in 1878. Although not as well known as his contemporary Johannes Brahms, Rheinberger, like Brahms, often found inspiration in the music of the past at a time when there was much experimentation in a quest for newness and bold self-expression. His a cappella mass for two choirs is strongly rooted in

the older musical traditions, specifically that of the Venetian School, and was first performed in service on New Year's Day, 1879.

William Harris was, for most of his life, a cathedral organist and teacher, taking on the prestigious position of organist at St. George's, Windsor (Castle), from 1933-61. As such he became the piano teacher of Princess Elizabeth, now Queen Elizabeth II. His published output is small but his anthem, *Faire is the Heavens*, written in 1925, is one of the most loved double choir works in the Anglican choral tradition. Its text and rich harmonic language has gained it a permanent place in the choral repertory. It is sung to words by Edmund Spenser taken from his *An Hymne of Heavenly Beautie*, written in 1596 during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

The remaining works in this concert are all centered around the organ. *Tu es Petra* by Henri Mulet, dated 1911, represents an organist's conception of an organ solo based upon the same Biblical text as Widor's *Tu es Petrus*. With Mulet, this article comes full circle, as he was a student of both Guilmant and Widor – those that were sent away to study the Northern European tradition in hopes of reforming church music. This is followed by the gentle, slow section of the *Organ Symphony* of Saint-Saëns, the organist/composer who dared question officially authorized church music vulgarities. Here, the organ is heard in its more gentle mode.

The Evensong concert ends by joining all forces together in a curious arrangement of the much beloved *Toccata* from the *Symphony, No 5* of Charles-Marie Widor. This arrangement was made by Sir David Valentine Willcocks for choir, orchestra and organ and was given its premiere at the Royal Albert Hall, London, England on Sunday, 11 July 1999. On this occasion the organist, Jane Watts, had to triumph on the mighty Royal Albert Hall Organ against a symphony orchestra and 4,000 voices. It should be noted that the idea of adding choral parts to the *Toccata* was not a new one. Dr. Arthur C. Becker had originally suggested the idea to Widor while studying with him in Paris and, with Widor's approval, made sketches accordingly.

Spencerville Evensong Concert Series
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