

SPENCERVILLE EVENSONG CONCERT SERIES

presents

Joy-Leilani Garbutt, organist  
with  
Rebecca Kellerman Petretta, soprano

October 1, 2016  
4 p.m.

Spencerville Adventist Church  
16325 New Hampshire Ave  
SilverSpring, MD 20905

## Les Femmes Françaises et l'orgue

### Jeanne Demessieux (1921–68)

From Twelve Choral Preludes on Gregorian Chant Themes, op. 8, 1947

- Tu es Petrus: Marcia
- Rorate caeli (desuper): Choral orné
- O filii et filiae: Variations

### Joséphine Boulay (1869–1925)

Ave Maria from Six Motets à la Sainte Vierge et au Saint Sacrement, 1900

Ave Maria, gratia plena,	<i>Hail Mary, full of grace,</i>
Dominus tecum;	<i>the Lord is with thee.</i>
benedicta tu in mulieribus,	<i>Blessed art thou among women,</i>
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesu.	<i>and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.</i>

from Luke 1:28, salutation given by the Archangel Gabriel  
to the Virgin Mary at the Annunciation

Trois Pièces pour Orgue, 1898

- Prélude
- Andante
- Fugue

O salutaris from Six Motets à la Sainte Vierge et au Saint Sacrement, 1900

O salutaris Hostia	<i>O saving victim</i>
Quae caeli pandis ostium;	<i>who opens the gate of heaven,</i>
Bella premunt hostilia,	<i>hostile wars press on us,</i>
Da robur, fer auxilium. Amen.	<i>give strength, bring aid. Amen.</i>

**Mel Bonis (1858–1937)**

Adagio, op. 65, 1930

Quasi Andante, op. 152, 1928

**Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979)**

Trois Improvisations, 1912

- Prélude

- Petit Canon

- Improvisation

**Lili Boulanger (1893–1918)**

Pie Jesu, 1918

Pie Jesu Domine,  
dona eis requiem.

*Blessed Lord Jesus,  
give them rest.*

Pie Jesu Domine,  
dona eis requiem sempiternam. Amen.

*Blessed Lord Jesus,  
give them everlasting rest. Amen.*

**J. Demessieux**

Te Deum, op. 11, 1957/58

Joy-Leilani Garbutt, organ

Rebecca Kellerman Petretta, soprano

*A free-will offering will be received following this afternoon's concert.  
The proceeds help us to present these concerts free to the community. Your generosity is appreciated.*

*A reception will take place in the fellowship hall after the concert.  
All are invited for fellowship and refreshment.*

**UPCOMING CONCERTS**

**November 12, 4 p.m.**

Brass of the Potomac  
British Style Brass Band

**December 10, 4 p.m.**

Advent<sup>ist</sup> Lessons and Carols  
with choir, brass and organ

## About the Music

**Jeanne Demessieux** (13 February 1921 - 11 November 1968) was one of the most successful organ virtuosos of her day, and she had access to a first-rate musical education. As a student, her early career was carefully guided and guarded by her teacher, Marcel Dupré. She later went on to a life of performing, teaching, composing, and in her final years presiding as titulaire of the grand organ at La Madeleine (one of Paris's grandest churches). Her *Twelve Choral Preludes on Gregorian Chant Themes* display her unique musical language, as well as a variety of styles for treating plainchant themes. In the same way that Bach's *Orgelbüchlein* serves a didactic function, Demessieux's *Twelve Chorale Preludes* can also be considered as models for composing and improvising on a given theme. Her settings not only derive their musical material from the chant, but also match the tone and mood of the text.

*Tu Es Petrus*, in the style of a march, is a bold musical proclamation. In this setting Demessieux superimposes two different chant themes, both from the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. The five-note pedal theme, presented in a descending sequence throughout the piece, is taken from the fifth antiphon at first vespers. Above this, the uppermost voice quotes the versicle of the Alleluia from the mass. For those familiar with these chants, Demessieux is musically referencing a double statement of the text *Tu Es Petrus*, simultaneously in the highest and lowest registers of the organ.

*Rorate Caeli*, in the style of an ornamented chorale, is a tranquil setting of the benediction responsory sung during Advent. Most of the melody comes directly from the respond, but portions of the versicles are also utilized. The text, "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down the Just One," is painted in the original chant with a descending line spanning an octave. Demessieux's setting does not disrupt this line with ornaments and figurations, but rather highlights its original shape with anticipations, suspensions, and varying note durations.

*O Filii et Filiae*, an Easter benediction, is presented as a theme with five variations, ranging from the playful through the mysterious to the regal. The text of the chant is notable for its focus on the role of women in the resurrection story, and for addressing both sons and daughters. Demessieux's chromatic and polytonal harmonies preserve the modal flavor of the original tune. While the theme remains clearly discernible in each variation, the displacement of strong and weak beats serves to disguise it at times.

**Joséphine Boulay** (22 May 1869 - 5 August 1925) began her musical training with Louis Lebel at the Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles (National Institute for Blind Children). She went on to study at the Paris Conservatoire in the organ class of César Franck in 1887, and just a year later she earned a premier prix in organ. Further prizes included a premier prix in fugue, composition (as a student of Massenet), and a deuxième prix in harmony. Boulay returned to the Institut National as the professor of organ and harmony from 1890 until her death. She published her small oeuvre using only her first initial, possibly to avoid revealing her gender. After the initial publication of her *Trois Pièces* in 1898, the *Andante* was published in a 1909 collection by Durand, alongside pieces by Saint-Saëns, Franck, d'Indy, Gigout, Pierné, and Büsser.

Boulay's *Trois Pièces* place her firmly within the musical style of fin-de-siècle Paris through the use of rich chromatic harmonies, expressive melodies, and careful attention to line and voice-leading, demonstrating a use of chromaticism and dissonance that stay within the bounds of functional harmony. Unlike some of her contemporaries who wrote music that could be played on the organ or the harmonium (making it more marketable), the *Trois Pièces* are unequivocally for the organ. They each feature an independent pedal part, and the *Prélude* and *Andante* call for three manuals, specifying registrations that utilize multiple solo stops. The *Prélude* unfurls a lyrical melody over an A B B' A' form, creating repetition on a large scale while also repeating musical motives and rhythmic patterns within sections. A study in various modulatory techniques, the piece begins and ends in c# minor, but modulates to or briefly tonicizes many other key areas as remote as B major and C major. The *Andante* is driven forward by a pulsing eighth-note syncopation, which provides the illusion of movement. The Fugue displays an elegant construction, with a chromatic subject that combines Franckian expression with strictness of form. Voices enter in the anticipated order until the pedal entrance, which begins with something other than the fugue subject. The subject finally reaches the pedals at the mid-point of the piece, creating a significant arrival point.

*Ave Maria* and *O Salutaris* are the only two works for solo voice of the *Six Motets à la Sainte Vierge et au Saint Sacrement*. The other motets, *Regina Coeli*, *Sub Tuum*, *Agnus Dei*, and *Tantum Ergo*, range from two to five

voices. The *Ave Maria* has a unique dual form with an accompaniment that can be interpreted as two similar strophes under a through-composed vocal line. *O Salutaris*, which is binary in form for both the vocal line and the accompaniment, features a nearly unceasing broken octave ostinato.

Of all the composers featured on this program, **Mel Bonis** (21 January 1858 - 18 March 1937) was by far the most prolific. She composed nearly thirty pieces for the organ, and hundreds for other instruments. Bonis studied for a time at the Paris Conservatoire with César Franck and Ernest Guiraud, earning a premier prix in harmony and a deuxième prix in accompaniment, but she was not encouraged to continue after she married. Although her formal education ended prematurely, her extant correspondence reveal that she kept in communication with many organists and musicians of her day. She did not work professionally as an organist, but she had access to the Cavaillé-Coll organ at Notre-Dame d'Étretat near her husband's summer home, as well as the organ of Saint-Pierre-Saint-Paul in Sarcelles, next to their family home. Her works were published in collections such as the 1912 *L'Organiste Parroissial* and the 1912 edition of *Les Maîtres Contemporains de l'Orgue*.

The *Adagio* is dedicated to Henri Letocart, professor of organ at the Schola Cantorum and likely her advisor on organ registration. Loosely in A B A' form—with several subdivisions of the B section—the piece moves from e-flat minor, to E major, back to e-flat minor. The *Quasi Andante* is a tranquil musical miniature with phrase lengths that expand for the first half of the piece and then contract. Each phrase floridly ornaments a melodic descent of increasing range. In the penultimate phrase this structure is inverted, and the melody soars to the highest point of the piece.

**Nadia Boulanger** (6 September 1887 - 22 October 1979) was born to a musical family and is another example of a woman with access to the finest musical education. During her time at the Paris Conservatoire, she studied with Fauré, Widor, Vierne, Guilmant, Chapuis and Vidal. She took premier prix in the subjects of solfège, harmony, organ, accompaniment, fugue, and composition, and in 1908 she placed second in the Prix de Rome. From 1903 to 1905 she worked as a substitute organist for Fauré at La Madeleine, which was a significant role for any young organist, but especially a woman at that time. Boulanger's teaching career began at the Conservatoire Femina-Musica in 1907, and she later went on to teach at the École normale de musique, the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau (of which she became the director), and the Paris Conservatoire. She largely abandoned composition after the death of her sister Lili and was thereafter known primarily as a composition teacher and conductor.

The *Trois Improvisations* for organ were composed in 1911 at the request of Fr. Joseph Joubert, and published the following year. The *Prelude* begins in f minor and ends in the parallel major, but the middle section contains a surprising modulation to c# minor. The basic unit of construction is a melodic downbeat answered by three eighth-note chords. In *Petit Canon* the soprano and tenor carry on a canon at the octave, displaced by one eighth-note. The third piece, titled simply *Improvisation*, uses a similar compositional technique to Boulay's *Andante* with a repetitive eighth-note alternation giving the illusion of harmonic motion. Beginning in e-flat minor, the piece moves through several key areas before coming to rest in the parallel major.

**Lili Boulanger** (21 August 1893 - 15 March 1918), younger sister of Nadia, was the first woman to win the prestigious Prix de Rome in 1913. Because of her poor health she was unable to attend the Paris Conservatoire, but she demonstrated a great musical talent from an early age and studied composition privately with Gabriel Fauré, Georges Caussade, Paul Vidal, and her sister Nadia. After winning the Prix de Rome, she was able to spend some months composing at the Villa Medici, but her first stay was interrupted by WWI, and her second stay was interrupted by her declining health.

*Pie Jesu*, originally scored for voice, string quartet, harp, and organ, was later published in a version for organ and voice. Boulanger's compositional style for this piece focuses on color and shape. The writing is highly chromatic, full of non-functional harmonies and juxtapositions of parallel and contrary motion. The accompaniment is constructed almost entirely of two-bar phrases, while the vocal line is freer, crossing over these groupings to create longer phrase structures. The opening g-minor chord and concluding G-Major chord (with an added 6th) form the outer edges of a tonal arch structure, while the midpoint of the piece is the section of greatest harmonic instability, with multiple interlocking tritones. This arch shape is present on a smaller scale in the rising and falling chromatic motion of the organ part, which characterizes the first 25 measures of the piece. The *Pie Jesu* was Boulanger's final composition, which she dictated to her sister Nadia from her death bed.

Demessieux's setting of the *Te Deum* demonstrates that 20th-century metric and tonal flexibility are quite suitably paired with a musical theme that is modal and without a fixed meter. The piece was inspired by the organ of the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City, where Demessieux gave a concert in 1955. Although the piece quotes many different parts of the *Te Deum* chant that may or may not be perceptible to the listener, the opening three pitches (ascending E, G, A,) are an audible part of the DNA of the piece. This motivic cell, and its transpositions and inversions, form the musical thread connecting a highly chromatic, often dissonant, and polytonal musical landscape. She utilizes standard compositional devices such as ostinati, pedal tones, melodic inversion, and intervallic relationships of 4ths, 5ths and octaves. However, she mixes these more traditional elements with poly-tonality, highly chromatic passages, non-functional progressions of parallel chords, and tritonal relationships. For all of its harmonic and tonal ambiguity, the piece begins and ends with E, stated in octaves in measure 1, and concluding with an unaltered E-Major chord. Because E is not tonicized in any traditional form either at the beginning or end of the piece, it functions as a frame, or an aural signal that the piece has reached its conclusion. Constructed in several sections, the piece can be understood as an introduction, followed by a tripartite form. Demessieux's *Te Deum* is not only a successful merging of the ancient and the contemporary, but it is also a vibrant sonic experience and a compelling piece of music.

## About the Performers

Joy-Leilani Garbutt has recently completed her coursework at the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music at The Catholic University of America where she is pursuing a Ph.D. in musicology, a minor in sacred music, and organ studies with Dr. Jeremy Filsell. This Spring she will complete her comprehensive examinations and then begin her dissertation, continuing the exploration of the topic of women composer/organists. She holds a Master of Education degree from The Harvard Graduate School of Education and a Master of Music in organ performance from Northwestern University, where she served as Organ Scholar for the Alice Millar Chapel Choir under the direction of Dr. Stephen Alltop. As an organist and harpsichordist she performed with the New England Youth Ensemble in England, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, and Mexico. She is the Minister of Music at Christ Lutheran Church in Washington, D.C., organist for the Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist Church, and choral accompanist for the Spencerville Seventh-day Adventist Church. Joy-Leilani lives in downtown Silver Spring, Maryland, with her husband Mark Willey (also an organist) and their cat Marie-Madeleine Duruffé (alas, not an organist, or even a lover of music).

Hailed as a soprano with “grace and elegance” by the Washington Post, Soprano Rebecca Kellerman Petretta is a sought after presence in the DC metro area consort and recital scene. Rebecca sings with various professional ensembles in the DC area including The Washington Bach Consort, Chantry, Opera Lafayette and The National Gallery Vocal Ensemble. Most recently Rebecca's solo appearances have included recitals featuring the works of Reger, Dupré, Britten, Monteverdi, Purcell and Handel. She also enjoys performing and premiering new works and is currently working on a recording project featuring the music of UK composers Leo Popplewell and Jeremy Filsell as well as some lesser known works of Dupré and Moeran. Rebecca currently studies with acclaimed teacher Elizabeth Daniels. She has studied with Emma Kirkby, Judith Coen and famed Italian coach Enza Ferrari as well as Julianne Baird and Craig Rutenburg. Rebecca received her BM and MM in Vocal Performance from Shenandoah University. She studied Bel Canto in Spoleto, Italy and studied privately at the Hochschule für Musik in Stuttgart, Germany. Her career has taken her to various countries throughout Europe as a soloist and chorister including England, France, Italy, Austria, The Czech Republic and Germany.