

VERIZON HALL

SATURDAY, APRIL 12

3PM

MASTER MUSICIANS, ORGAN SERIES

DAME GILLIAN WEIR, ORGAN

JONGEN

Sonata Eroica

FRANCK

Choral II in B minor

EBEN

Selections from *Sunday Music*

Moto ostinato

Finale

—Intermission—

HAMPTON

Selections from *Five Dances for Organ*

The Primitives

At the Ballet

Everyone Dance

BRAHMS

Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen

Herzlich tut mich verlangen

Herzlich tut mich erfreuen

PEETERS

Toccata, Fugue and Hymn on *Ave Maris Stella*

LANQUETUIT

Toccata

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The use of cameras and recording equipment is prohibited during performances.
As a courtesy to the performers and fellow audience members, please turn off all
beepers, watch alarms and cellular phones. Latecomers and those who leave the
concert hall during the performance will be seated at appropriate intervals.

JOSEPH JONGEN

(b. Liège, 1873; d. Sart-lez-Spa, Belgium, 1953)

Sonata Eroica

Like Franck, Jongen was a native of Liège in Belgium, and he was associated for most of his life with the Conservatory there, as student, professor and finally principal. His Heroic Sonata dates from 1930, and though occasionally reminiscent of his compatriot, shows originality and a masterly knowledge of the demands and resources of the organ. It runs the gamut of the emotions, from the massive rhapsodic beginning through the linked variations on the dreamy, carol-like theme, which grows to proportions of heroic splendor.

CÉSAR FRANCK

(b. Liège, 1822; d. Paris, 1890)

Choral II in B minor

The Belgian-born César Franck was organist of St. Clotilde, in Paris, for over 30 years, and from 1872 onward Professor of organ at the Conservatoire. His works for the instrument form a much more important and distinctive contribution to its repertoire than their number might suggest. Liszt remarked of his *Six Pièces*, “These poetic works have a clearly marked place alongside the masterpieces of Bach.” Franck was much loved by his students, who gave him the nickname “Pater seraphicus” seraphic father. In this deeply felt Choral we hear him at his most emotional. Franck uses the term *choral* not in the German sense (meaning a Lutheran hymn-melody) but to describe an original theme harmonized in choral fashion. He wrote three chorals. His best work, this is a giant passacaglia, suggesting the tolling of a great bell as it moves from somber genesis through an avalanche of sound to its peaceful end.

PETR EBEN

(Žamberk, Czech Republic, 1929; d. Prague, 2007)

Selections from *Sunday Music* (Moto ostinato, Finale)

The Czech composer Petr Eben spent his childhood in Krumlov, South Bohemia, where he studied the piano, organ and cello. At 15 he was imprisoned by the Germans; his sufferings at that time have given direction to many of the ideas in his music,

much of which is concerned with the struggle between good and evil. After the War he studied piano and composition at Prague’s Academy of Music, and from 1955 taught at Charles University in Prague.

His four-movement suite, *Sunday Music*, was written in 1958. Several plainsong themes link it to the liturgy, albeit informally; one, the kyrie Orbis factor, is heard every Sunday in the normal liturgy as the *ite, missa est*. The Moto ostinato, the third movement, portrays symbolically Man’s struggle against Evil, inspired by the Gospel story of the man possessed by devils who said to Jesus, “My name is Legion, for we are many.” Inexorably the forces advance into battle, singing an old hanseatic hymn. At the start of the Finale we survey the field at the battle; gradually the survivors respond to the trumpet calls and the work ends with the great plainsong hymn *Salve Regina*, soaring above the full organ.

CALVIN HAMPTON

(b. Kittanning, Pennsylvania, 1938; d. Port Charlotte, Florida, 1984)

Selections from *Five Dances for Organ* (The Primitives, At the Ballet, Everyone Dance)

Calvin Hampton was born in Pennsylvania; he studied at Oberlin College, and at Syracuse University, and for many years was organist and choirmaster at Calvary Church in New York City. He concertized extensively but will probably be best remembered as a composer, writing a great deal of music for the church’s liturgy, plus concertos and a number of works for organ solo. The five dances were his response to a commission from Walter Holtkamp Jr. Asked for an anthem for choir and organ for the dedication of his new organ at Park Avenue Christian church, NY, Hampton confided that he would like to write a suite for organ, inspired by Stravinsky, with each movement featuring an ostinato rhythm coupled with a simple tune. These exuberant and brilliant dances are a major addition to the repertoire.

JOHANNES BRAHMS

(b. Hamburg, 1833; d. Vienna, 1897)

(a) **Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen**

(b) **Herzlich tut mich verlangen**

(c) **Herzlich tut mich erfreuen**

Brahms early showed an interest in the organ. The eleven chorale preludes which form Brahms' last composition and from which collection these are taken are remarkable for their sense of true organ style—consummate in their contrapuntal design yet emotionally charged in the manner of the Romantic song. According to Kalbeck they were composed in memory of Clara Schumann, and within its short compass each piece combines great technical concentration with an intimacy of feeling that recalls the most deeply felt of Bach's chorale preludes. All or most were written while Brahms was at Ischl in the Salzkammergut, where he liked to vacation, after the death of Clara Schumann and while Brahms himself was gravely ill. Not all the compositions deal with thoughts of last things, however, although even the most cheerful has one eye on the eternal. (a) ('There is a rose blooming') is a Christmas chorale in which Brahms depicts one rose in the winter snow; and after the yearning of (b) 'My heart longs for a blessed end' comes the radiant joy of (c), 'My faithful heart rejoices To greet the summertime, When God reneweth all things To their eternal prime'.

FLOR PEETERS

(b. Thielen, near Antwerp, 1903;

d. Antwerp, 1985)

Toccata, Fugue and Hymn on Ave Maris Stella

Flor Peeters was born in Thielen, a small village near Antwerp in Belgium. The youngest of eleven children he was a prodigy, winning a host of prizes at the Lemmens Institute and going on to worldwide acclaim as performer, composer and pedagogue. He was organist of St Rombout cathedral in Mechelen for 60 years, and was made Baron Peeters by the King of the Belgians when he retired as Director of the Antwerp Conservatoire. Peeter's jubilant tribute to the plainsong theme Hail Mary, Star of the Sea was dedicated to his friend Charles Tournemire, Franck's successor at Ste-Clotilde in Paris.

MARCEL LANQUETUIT

(b. 1894; d. 1985)

Toccata

Marcel Lanquetuit's dazzling Toccata is a musical Baked Alaska, ending our musical banquet with a shower of sparks. Lanquetuit was organist of the Cathedral of Rouen, and wrote this Toccata in 1926 before leaving for a concert tour of the USA. He was a particularly fine improviser. The piece is dedicated to Widor.

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