

THE LITTLEFIELD ORGAN SERIES

presents a Guest Artist Recital:

WILLIAM PETERSON, *organ*

February 21, 2010

3:00 PM

Walker-Ames Room

PROGRAM

TOCCATA SUPER: IN TE, DOMINE, SPERAVI.....SAMUEL SCHEIDT (1587-1654)

Italian Contrapuntal Studies

from IL TRANSILVANOGIROLAMO DIRUTA (c. 1554-1610)

Open Score with two voices

Open Score with three voices

from FIORI MUSICALI (1635).....GIROLAMO FRESCOBALDI (1583-1643)

Ricercar con obbligo del Basso come appare

ONDER EEN LINDE GROEN (4 variations)..... JAN PIETERSZOOM SWEELINCK (1562-1621)

HERR CHRIST, DER EINIG GOTTS SOHNHEINRICH SCHEIDEMANN (c. 1595-1663)

(2 Verses)

PRAELUDIUM IN G MINOR (BUXWV 148).....DIETERICH BUXTEHUDE (c. 1637-1707)

NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT (BWV 657)JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)
(à 2 claviers et pédale / il canto fermo nel soprano)

DUETTO I (BWV 802)J. S. BACH

DIES SIND DIE HEILGEN ZEHEN GEBOT (BWV 678)J. S. BACH
(à 2 Clav. et Ped. / Canto fermo in Canone)

FUGUE IN E^b MAJOR (BWV 552, 2)J. S. BACH

Program Note

Scheidt: The young Samuel Scheidt served as organist at the Moritzkirche in his native Halle perhaps as early as 1603. Around 1607-08 he studied with the great Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck in Amsterdam. By the end of 1609 Scheidt, again in Halle, became court organist to Margrave Christian Wilhelm of Brandenburg and later held the title Kapellmeister. Scheidt remained in Halle throughout his career. A notable composer of both keyboard music and sacred vocal music, Scheidt in 1624 published the monumental three-volume collection of keyboard music, the *Tabulatura nova*, consisting of 58 titled compositions. In the *Tabulatura nova*, Scheidt demonstrated mastery of important genres of keyboard composition (variations, settings of chorales, Magnificats, fantasies, fugues, echo compositions, and toccata.) As the concluding piece in the second part of the collection Scheidt printed a grand 211-measure “Toccatà super: In te, Domine, speravi” (the textual reference may be to the first line of Psalm 31, “In Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust.”) The Toccata is based on a set of pitches – G-A-B-C-D-E-D--G – which is the set of pitches found in a canon, “In te Domine speravi,” at the end of Part I of the *Tabulatura nova* (#10.) Scheidt builds the form of the toccata from sections of imitative writing and sections of free writing (based on various figurative patterns).

Diruta: An organist, teacher, and music theorist, Girolamo Diruta published *Il transilvano*, a treatise on organ playing, in Venice in 1593 (Book I) and 1609 (Book II.) At the beginning of Book II, Diruta provides instructional pieces in two, three, and four voices (in the section of the treatise titled “Method for Intabulating Any Kind of Vocal Piece.”) The “Open Score with Two Voices” is only fourteen measures, and the “Open Score with Three Voices” is twenty-four measures long. Introducing the third piece, “Ricercar with Four Voices. Open Score,” Diruta writes: “I wish to score and intabulate for you one of my own ricercari with inverted imitations, one I wrote at the beginning of my studies” and he then prints an impressive ricercar of seventy-six measures to illustrate four-voice writing. Later in Book II Diruta prints a set of twelve Ricercari by various composers – the first two are by Luzzasco Luzzaschi, an important figure in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Frescobaldi: One of the most influential composers of keyboard music in the first half of the seventeenth century, Girolamo Frescobaldi studied initially with Luzzasco Luzzaschi, court organist to Duke Alfonso II d’Este in Ferrara. From the early years of the new century Frescobaldi often resided in Rome, and in 1608 he was elected organist at St. Peter’s, which housed two organs. Frescobaldi apparently played the organ in other religious institutions as well, and he performed on the harpsichord for selected Roman cardinals. His keyboard works, published in several volumes between 1608 and 1645, include notable examples of the toccata, canzona, ricercar, and variation set. Important publications of keyboard music in the early part of his career include a book of fantasies (1608,) a book of toccatas and partitas (1615,) and a collection of works entitled “ricercar” or “canzon” (1615) which was printed as many as five times. Frescobaldi’s celebrated collection of organ music, *Fiori musicali* (“Musical Flowers,”) was published in 1635, and it includes three organ masses along with other works.

Sweelinck: Called the “Orpheus of Amsterdam,” Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck was a celebrated organist, composer, and teacher at the turn of the seventeenth century. From about 1580 until his death, Sweelinck served as organist at the Oude Kerk (Old Church) in Amsterdam. Writing in 1655, Vondel the poet gave a report of Sweelinck’s marvelous organ playing: “St. Nicolas [or the Oude Kerk] achieved a prestige through Sweelinck’s fame and favour; His spirit emanated in so heavenly a way from the very mouth of the pipes That it was as if angels were echoing the very Psalms.” Sweelinck’s keyboard works include approximately fifteen toccatas and fifteen fantasias, several sets of variations on secular tunes, and many works based on sacred melodies. “Onder een line groen” is a set of four variations based on a tune derived from the English ballad “All in a garden green.”

Scheidemann: Heinrich Scheidemann, after a period of study with Sweelinck in the years 1611-14, held the position of organist at the Katharinenkirche (St. Katherine's Church) in Hamburg (a position earlier held by his father) from at least 1629 until his death, of the plague, in 1663. The 56-stop Katharinenkirche organ, as enlarged by Gottfried Fritzsche in the 1630s, had four manuals and pedals. Highly regarded as an organist, composer, and teacher, Scheidemann made an important contribution to keyboard repertory which includes free works (such as the *praeambulum*,) many chorale-based compositions, and Magnificats.

Buxtehude: Dieterich Buxtehude, one of the most important figures in the history of organ music, has always been defined in relation to one geographical site, Lübeck, and to one particular building, the Marienkirche. Buxtehude, who probably studied with his father and at the Lateinschule in Helsingør, began his own career as an organist in Helsingborg and Helsingør in the 1650s and 60s. In 1668 he was appointed to one of the most important positions in North Germany, the Marienkirche (St. Mary's Church) of Lübeck, where he remained for almost 40 years. When he arrived at the Marienkirche it housed two three-manual organs – a large instrument of 52 stops on the west wall of the nave and a somewhat smaller one of about 40 stops on the east wall of the Totentanz Chapel. While in Lübeck he maintained ties with many contemporary German musicians, and he received visits from notable figures including Handel and Mattheson in 1703 and the twenty-one-year-old Johann Sebastian Bach in 1706. Buxtehude's complete works include both vocal and instrumental music. The 128 vocal compositions are mostly of the cantata type with sacred texts. The keyboard works include about 25 "Praeludium" pieces for the organ, two ciaconas and one *passacaglia*, a dozen pieces entitled "canzona," and nearly 50 settings of chorales. The structure of the "Praeludium" typically depends on the alternation of toccata-like (free) sections and fugal sections: the "Praeludium in G Minor" includes a free improvisatory section, a fugal section followed by a brief cadential episode, a second fugal section, and a concluding ciacona section.

Bach: In an early biographical sketch of the living J. S. Bach, by Johann Gottfried Walther (1732), we find the following useful summary of the composer's career:...learned the first *principia* on the clavier from his eldest brother, Mr. Johann Christoph Bach, formerly organist and schoolmaster at Ohrdruff; became organist, first, Anno 1703, in Arnstadt at the New Church, and Anno 1707 in Mühlhausen, at St. Blasius's Church; came Anno 1708 to Weimar, where he became Chamber Musician to His Serene Highness and Court Organist, and Anno 1714 Concertmaster; Anno 1717 Capellmeister to the Court of Cöthen; and Anno 1723, after the death of the late Mr. Kuhnau, Music Director in Leipzig; also Capellmeister to the Court of Saxe-Weissenfels.

Walther then lists published keyboard compositions – the six Partitas under the title *Clavier-übung* – as representative examples of Bach's "excellent clavier works."

The large collections that Bach made in the last two decades of his term at Leipzig (1730-1750) unquestionably contain much of his greatest music. Among these collections are the four publications with the title *Clavierübung* ("Keyboard Practice,") *Das wohltemperirte Clavier* ("The Well-tempered Clavier," second part,) *The Musical Offering*, and the monumental *Art of Fugue*. In Bach's own compositional career, and indeed in the history of keyboard music, his *Clavierübung* occupies a special position, for it includes a large body of works for harpsichord and organ that Bach himself selected for publication while he was at Leipzig:

Part I (1731): Six Partitas

Part II (1735): Italian Concerto and French Overture

Part III (1739): Various Preludes on the Catechism and Other Hymns for the Organ

Part IV (1741-42): "Goldberg Variations"

Taking note of the various styles of composition, the forms, and the compositional techniques represented in the *Clavierübung*, and taking note of the demands made of the performer, Christoph Wolff observed: "Indeed with these four parts of the *Clavier-übung* Bach offered his contemporaries the largest and most demanding publication of keyboard music to date." Keyboard players have traditionally found a wealth of music for study and for performance in these collections and in two other major collections, the Six Sonatas (c. 1730) and the "Seventeen Chorales" (mid- to late-1740s,) both left in manuscript.

In the manuscript source of the "Seventeen Chorales" (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, P 271,) Bach began the fair copy of a group of chorales and completed just fifteen. Another hand – that of a pupil Altnikol – carries on with two additional chorales. Bach's autograph of the Canonic variations on "Vom Himmel hoch" follows these seventeen pieces, and another chorale, "Vor deinen Thron" (BWV 668), in an unknown hand, follows the variations. Among the seventeen chorales is "Nun danket alle Gott" ("Now let all thank God") (BWV 657) based on a chorale tune which is still widely known in our day. Bach explores a well-established compositional technique, the "Pachelbel" model, of elaborating a pre-composed melody. The eight phrases of the chorale tune (which might be represented as **a, b, a, b, c, d, e, f**) are heard in sequence in the soprano range within a formal structure composed of eight sections. Each of the eight sections stands as a contrapuntal elaboration of the pertinent chorale phrase: Bach arranges that the trumpet-like announcement of a given phrase of the chorale will sound like the culmination of a contrapuntal working out of a subject based on the pitches in the phrase at hand (the eight sections, then, may be represented diagrammatically as A B A B C D E F).

The three remaining pieces, Duetto I (BWV 802), "Dies sind die Heiligen zehen Gebot" (BWV 678), and Fugue in E^b Major (BWV 552, 2) were all included in the *Dritter Theil der Clavierübung* (1739), Bach's first printed organ collection, which bore the title "Third part of the Keyboard Practice consisting in Various preludes on the Catechism and Other Hymns for the Organ for Music Lovers and especially for Connoisseurs of such Work, to refresh their Spirits composed by Johann

Sebastian Bach..." Notable in the collection are many works displaying the composer's expertise in the art of composing contrapuntal textures. Bach provided in the *Dritter Theil der Clavierübung* examples of two-voice, three-voice, four-voice, five-voice, and six-voice contrapuntal writing within the twenty-seven pieces. The chorale preludes fall into two broad categories – the "large" settings (for manual and obligatory pedal) and the "small" settings (for manual alone). In "Dies sind die heiligen zehen Gebot" ("These are the holy Ten Commandments") Bach presents the six phrases of the chorale tune in canon at the octave – in the tenor register – within an elaborate five-voice contrapuntal web. The "Four Duets" were apparently added shortly before the publication of the "Third Part of the Keyboard Practice;" scholar Gregory Butler proposed that the four duets date from the period July-August 1739. He continues: "As such, they would have been the last compositions in the collection to be written, included almost as an afterthought." The opening Praeludium and the closing Fuga are without question the most impressive free works in the "Third Part of the Keyboard Practice." The Fugue in E^b Major depends on three differentiated types of material here arranged in a tripartite structure with magisterial proportions. Moreover, each of the main sections, A through C, consists of a fully developed fugue on a distinctive subject, with subjects A and B combined in the second section and subjects A and C combined in the third and final section.

—William Peterson

WILLIAM PETERSON is the Harry S. and Madge Rice Thatcher Professor of Music and College Organist at Pomona College. He received the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California, Berkeley. Earlier he received the B.A. and B.M. degrees from Oberlin College and Conservatory. At Pomona College he teaches organ and courses in music history.

As a performer, he has played concerts in recent years in many parts of the United States. He has performed a number of all-Bach recitals at various locations, including complete performances of Bach's *Dritter Theil der Clavierübung*. In April of 2005 he played a concert of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century German music on the Taylor and Boody organ at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, and in September of 2006 he played a concert of French music - "French Organ Music from the Time of World War I" - on the Fisk organ (Fisk, Op. 116) in Finney Chapel at Oberlin College and Conservatory of Music. He played a concert on the recently installed Fisk organ in the Christopher Cohan Center in San Luis Obispo, CA in 2008.

As a scholar he has worked extensively on French organ music of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He is co-editor with Lawrence Archbold of *French Organ Music from the Revolution to Franck and Widor* (University of Rochester Press, 1995, now in its third printing), a volume that includes eleven articles by a group of American and French authors. Peterson is author of "Lemmens, His Ecole d'orgue, and Nineteenth-Century Organ Methods" and co-author of an article focusing on organ music during the French Revolution in that volume. He presented a paper entitled "Cavallé-Coll's Late Style Reconsidered: A Classical Phase in the History of French Organ Building?" at a conference at Oberlin in 2002. He is the author of "Organ Music in the Shadow of the Great War: A Preliminary Investigation" published in *La Flûte harmonique* (2007), a special issue devoted to the proceedings of a conference held in Paris and Reims in November of 2006. His article, "Storm Fantasies for the Nineteenth-Century Organ in France," appeared in *Keyboard Perspectives*, volume II (2009). Research projects have been supported by a Fulbright research grant, by the Mellon Foundation (Mellon Summer Research Grant, 2005), and by the Pomona College Research Committee.

In October of 2002 he played the Inaugural Concert on the Hill Memorial Organ built by C.B. Fisk, of Gloucester, MA (Fisk, Op. 117) for Bridges Hall of Music at Pomona College. He was heard on "Pipedreams" (National Public Radio) in a 2006 broadcast: the program included music of Tournemire, Duruflé, and Widor recorded in concerts he presented in Bridges Hall in 2002 and 2003.

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April 25, 2010: SANDRA SODERLUND, professor of organ and harpsichord at Mills College in Oakland, California, performs music from the Renaissance to the present day, including works by Buxtehude, Bach and lesser-known composers. 3:00 PM, Walker-Ames Room

