

THE LITTLEFIELD ORGAN SERIES

presents a Guest Artist Recital:

ROBERT PARKINS

March 2, 2014

3:00 PM

Walker Ames Room

PROGRAM

Tiento III (1o tono)
Diferencias sobre la Pavana Italiana } Antonio de Cabezón (1510-1566)

Tiento [16] de 4o tono ("a modo de canción") Francisco Correa de Arauxo (1584-1654)

Tiento de 2o tono sobre la letanía de la Virgen Pablo Bruna (1611-1679)

Tiento [12] de falsas (4o tono)
Xácara } Juan Cabanilles (1644-1712)

Pièce d'Orgue (Fantasy in G), BWV 572
Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit, BWV 672
Christe, aller Welt Trost, BWV 673
Kyrie, Gott heiliger Geist, BWV 674
Fugue on the Magnificat, BWV 733
Meine Seele erhebt den Herren, BWV 648 } Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sonata No. 4, Op. 98 Josef Rheinberger (1839-1901)
I. Tempo moderato

PROGRAM NOTES

ANTONIO DE CABEZÓN, organist to the royal court of Spain, was among the most distinguished musicians of the 16th century. His *Obras de música* (1578) include 14 *tientos*, imitative keyboard works that originally resembled polyphonic motets. However, the *tiento* acquired an idiomatic identity all its own in the hands of Cabezón, whose **TIENTO III** is often regarded as the finest of them all. Although not acknowledged in the title, the principal subject is derived from the Marian antiphon *Salve regina* (“Hail, Queen, Mother of Mercy”). New motives develop through rhythmic transformation of the two subjects, a forward-looking concept at that time.

Cabezón, blind from early childhood, had inherited the practice of improvising variations (*diferencias*) on popular melodies, already cultivated to a surprisingly high level in 16th-century Spain—earlier than in other European countries. His **DIFERENCIAS ON THE ITALIAN PAVANE** consist of five continuous variations on a familiar Renaissance dance. The melody, in the top voice for the first three variants, migrates to the tenor for the last two, rendering it somewhat harder to discern.

By the early 1600s, the genre labeled *tiento* had developed into a colorful array of strikingly idiomatic and distinctive subgenres. The **TIENTO ON THE 4TH TONE** by FRANCISCO CORREA DE ARAUXO is an unusual mélange of contrasting textures, rhythms, and meters “in the manner of a *chanson*.” Most of his 62 *tientos* do not afford the opportunity to vary the registration within a single piece, but the clearly delineated and sometimes strongly contrasting sections of this work encourage judicious stop changes. In the tradition of *ensaladas*, *batallas*, and other motley Spanish keyboard pastiches, this work remains unique within Correa's oeuvre.

The Spaniard PABLO BRUNA, sightless like Cabezón, was known as “the blind man from Daroca.” His **TIENTO ON THE LITANY OF THE VIRGIN**, evidently intended for divided bass and treble stops (although not indicated in the title), is quite possibly his most alluring work. It begins with paired imitation of the theme in all parts, but contrapuntal independence in the lower voices soon dissipates as the treble assumes the more prominent role. What follows is a loose set of variations generated by the opening subject and its implied harmonic scheme, which crystallizes only later during the course of the piece (I-V-I-III-I-IV-V).

The “golden age” of early Iberian keyboard music drew to a close with the passing of JUAN CABANILLES, the renowned Cathedral organist of Valencia, whose works are estimated to comprise more than half the keyboard literature by known 17th-century Spanish composers. The **TIENTO DE FALSAS** on the 4th tone is only one of several examples of this subgenre within Cabanilles' prolific output. The term *falsas* refers to the myriad suspensions and other dissonances that characterize this mystical, meditative style (a distant cousin of the Italian elevation toccata). The composer's virtuosic **XÁCARA** is a set of “continuous variations” based on a vulgar street song and dance. Despite the lowly origins of his subject, Cabanilles creates an artful blend of variations weaving around an inchoate bass line that finally coalesces as the “Phrygian tetrachord,” supporting a familiar harmonic progression that characterizes various types of Spanish music.

The *Fantasy in G*, quite unlike any other organ work of JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH, bears the title **PIÈCE D'ORGUE** in several manuscripts, and the headings for each of the three contrasting sections are also given in French: *Très vite ment - Gravement - Lentement*. The “French connection” is not at all clear, but it is curious that at one point the pedal line dips below the range of the common German pedalboard to BB—playable only on some French instruments of the time.

In 1739, Bach published the third of four collections he named *Clavierübung* (“Keyboard Practice”). Part III includes chorale preludes based on the Mass and Catechism sandwiched between an imposing free prelude and a corresponding fugue. For the hymns he provided large settings with pedal as well as smaller preludes for hands alone. The tunes for the **KYRIE-CHRISTE-KYRIE** group are derived from older Gregorian chants; however, the complete chorale melodies are never quoted in Bach’s three short *manualiter* versions. Rather, a subject is distilled from the opening phrase of each to generate an imitative fughetta. The three titles may be translated *Kyrie, God Eternal Father / Christ, Hope of the World / Kyrie, God Holy Spirit*.

Bach’s **FUGUE ON THE MAGNIFICAT** is based on the chorale *Meine Seele erhebt den Herren* (“My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord”). Designated by the composer “pro organo pleno,” this fugal chorale prelude of larger scale is introduced by a subject derived from the hymn tune and propelled by a countersubject in continuous eighth notes. The two phrases of the cantus firmus are sounded by the pedal in whole notes—but not until the last two pages. The chorale melody has its origin in a Gregorian Psalm tone, the *tonus peregrinus*, or “wandering mode,” that appears to begin in F Major and end in d minor.

Just two years before Bach’s death, the publisher Johann Schübler issued six of his cantata movements (one presumably lost) transcribed for organ by the composer himself. **MEINE SEELE ERHEBT DEN HERREN**, BWV 648, was originally a duet between alto and tenor from Cantata No. 10 (for the “Feast of the Visitation of Mary”). The chorale tune, scored for oboes and trumpet in the Cantata, again appears in its unembellished form—but played by the right hand rather than the pedals (as in the *Magnificatfuge*).

JOSEPH RHEINBERGER’S **SONATA NO. 4 IN A MINOR** is one of 20 sonatas for organ by the esteemed German organist and composition teacher. Written in 1876, the Fourth Sonata continues in the early Romantic tradition of Mendelssohn. The first movement opens with a strong theme that soon gives way to what sounds like a soft chorale, very much like the opening movement of Mendelssohn's Sonata I. The “chorale” is a harmonization of the “Ninth Psalm tone, called ‘Tonus Peregrinus’,” as indicated by the composer in a footnote. The ancient Magnificat melody then becomes a second theme worked into the texture in combination with the opening theme.

[Notes by Robert Parkins]

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

ROBERT PARKINS is the University Organist and a Professor of the Practice of Music at Duke University. He has performed throughout the United States, in Europe, and in Central America, and his playing has been described as “artistic, technically flawless, and imaginative” (The American Organist).

For a number of years, he has specialized in early Iberian keyboard music, and more recently he has focused his attention on the German Romantic organ and its literature. His publications include articles for a number of professional journals as well as the chapter on “Spain and Portugal” in *Keyboard Music Before 1700* (Routledge 2004).

His recordings have appeared on the Calcante, Gothic, Musical Heritage Society, and Naxos labels--including the CD's *Early Iberian Organ Music*, *Brahms: Complete Organ Works*, *German Romantic Organ Music*, *Iberian and South German Organ Music*, and *Organ Music of Frescobaldi*. *Early Spanish Keyboard Music*, a harpsichord LP originally issued by MHS in 1983, is now available again as a free download at <http://sites.duke.edu/robertparkins/early-spanish-keyboard-music/>.

Dr. Parkins received his degrees from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the Yale University School of Music. In 1973 he was awarded a Fulbright grant to study in Vienna. His teachers have included Gerre Hancock, Anton Heiller, Ralph Kirkpatrick, Charles Krigbaum, and Michael Schneider.

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