

HOUGHTON COLLEGE

GREATBATCH SCHOOL OF MUSIC

presents

Judy A. Congdon

Organ

in

Faculty Recital

John and Charles Wesley Chapel

Monday, September 23, 2019

8:00 p.m.

Program

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| Prelude and Fugue in B minor, BWV 544 | Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750) |
| Two Chorale Voluntaries
Voluntary on <i>Rosedale</i>
Voluntary on <i>Land of Rest</i> | Robert Lind
(b. 1940) |
| Sonata in A major, Op. 65, No. 3
Con moto maestoso
Andante tranquillo | Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847) |
| The Star Spangled Banner: Concert Variations | John Knowles Paine
(1839-1906) |
| Prelude et Fugue sur le nom d'Alain, Op. 7 | Maurice Duruflé
(1902-1986) |

Program Notes

The **Prelude and Fugue in B-minor** (BWV 544), like most of Bach's organ works, was not published during his lifetime, and the precise dating of the work is difficult at best. But Bach scholar Peter Williams suggests that its structure is similar to that of other prelude-and-fugue pairs known to date from the later Leipzig years. The contrapuntal texture of prelude as well as fugue certainly suggests that a mature Bach created it.

A unique characteristic of the B-minor Prelude is the preponderance of accented dissonance—suspensions, appoggiaturas, and accented passing tones—on nearly every downbeat of the piece except the opening note and interior and final cadences. The harmonic structure of the fugue is more consonant, less chromatic. Thematic material of both is characterized by stepwise motion.

Robert Lind (b. 1940) was a student of noted American organist, composer, and church musician Leo Sowerby (1895-1968), in whose memory he dedicated first of the **Two Chorale Voluntaries** played this evening. This piece is actually based on a hymn tune (*Rosedale*) composed by Sowerby and included in the Episcopal *Hymnal 1982*, paired with the text of a communion hymn:

Come, risen Lord, and deign to be our guest;
nay, let us be thy guests, the feast is thine.
Thyself at thine own board make manifest
in thine own Sacrament of Bread and Wine.

The tune *Land of Rest* is an American folk melody, perhaps today most often sung with a text by Brian Wren (a pairing that also appears in the *Hymnal 1982*), "I come with joy to meet my Lord." Lind's setting of the text matches well the contour of the poem, which develops from introspection ("in awe and wonder to recall his live laid

down for me”) through a building of energy with recognition of his place as a member of Christ’s Body (“I come with Christians far and near...”) and finally to triumphant worship leading to outreach (“...as his people in the world, we’ll live and speak his praise.”)

While it is pleasant to imagine that Wren’s hymn text inspired Lind’s Voluntary on the tune *Land of Rest*, another possibility is that he had an older text in mind: “O land of rest, for thee I sigh! When will the moment come when I shall lay my armor by and dwell in peace at home?” This hymn text expresses a longing for heaven, which may fit with Lind’s dedication of this second piece “In memory of my beloved Barbara.”

The opening of **Mendelssohn’s Sonata Op. 65, No 3** for organ was first composed with the intention that it would serve as processional music for his sister Fanny’s 1829 wedding to Wilhelm Hensel. But illness prevented Felix from travelling to the wedding, and Fanny ended up composing her own wedding processional. Then in 1844, when Mendelssohn was commissioned by the English publisher Coventry and Hollier to compose a set of pieces for the organ, he revived the grand processional he had earlier written and employed it at the beginning and end of the 3rd sonata’s opening movement. The two statements of the processional frame an ingenious extended double fugue in which the pedals play the phrases of Martin Luther’s chorale “Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir” (Out of the depths have I cried to thee), a paraphrase of Psalm 130.

Mendelssohn’s six organ sonatas are somewhat unique in that they were largely conceived as individual pieces (“voluntaries” in English parlance), and then later grouped together into multi-movement works based on key relationships. None of the pieces is in sonata-allegro form, and the 3rd sonata is unusual in that it consists of a majestic first movement, then a lyrical, quiet, short second movement, and then it is finished, without the ‘tour de force’ final movement we expect in classical sonatas.

John Knowles Paine was the first American composer to achieve fame on both sides of the Atlantic. He came from a family of music teachers and musical instrument makers, including organ builders. At age 22 Paine travelled to Germany to further his musical education and remained there for 3 years, studying organ and orchestration and playing organ recitals throughout Europe. Upon his return to the US in 1861 Paine was appointed Harvard University's first organist and choirmaster. He also taught free courses at Harvard in music appreciation and music theory, the first course in these topics to be offered anywhere in the United States!

It was also in 1861, the year Paine returned from Europe, that he wrote *Variations on the Star Spangled Banner*. Though it was a well-known patriotic song at that time, the "Star-Spangled Banner" did not become the national anthem of the United States until March 3, 1931 (by Act of Congress), some seventy years after Paine composed his variations. The tune upon which he based the variations sounds "wrong" in places, and a bit of history will help explain why:

Francis Scott Key composed the lyrics in 1814, and set them to an already-existing tune. In the 117 years between its creation and the Act of Congress that made it our national anthem, the song had become widely known and loved, but for many, many years there was apparently no single agreed-upon version of the tune. A committee of five (which included John Phillip Sousa) was formed to come up with a uniform version of the tune. Some versions were more ornate than others. Sousa's, written for band performance, added the initial dotted-note descending triad, and his version of the beginning won the committee's approval. The version of the tune on which Paine wrote his variations was earlier and somewhat simpler, yet still recognizable.

Jehan Alain (1911-1940) was a talented French organist and composer who had already produced an imaginative and profound body of works by the young age of 29, when he was killed in the line of duty as a soldier in World War II. **Maurice Duruflé**, a friend and admirer of Alain, two years later composed his *Prelude et Fugue sur le nom*

d'Alain, Opus 7 (1942) as a tribute to Alain. He derived its theme by extending the musical alphabet beyond H (the German symbol for B-natural), so that I = A, L = D, and N = F; thus the name ALAIN becomes the musical theme ADAAF, and both prelude and fugue are based on this simple collection of pitches. Alain's most famous and certainly most popular organ work is the piece entitled *Litanies*, and in the course of the prelude Duruflé presents lyrical melodies that stem from the melodic contours in *Litanies*. Finally, near the end of the prelude, we hear a line of music that is a cut-and-paste direct quote from Alain's famous piece. The fugue begins with an exposition of the simple ADAAF theme in eighth notes, continues with the exposition of a second (sixteenth-note) theme, and combines the two, intensifying the texture by means of stretto, and (as one CD-cover unnamed author put it) "ends in a blaze of glory."

We would like to thank the Houghton College administration for its faithful support of the Greatbatch School of Music.

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