



2003-2004 Series

presents

JON STUBER
Organ

Saturday, March 13, 2004
8:00 pm

First Presbyterian Church
Sanctuary
Portland, Oregon

CELEBRATION WORKS

Program

Paso en Do Major	Narciso Casanovas (1747-1799)
Nun laßt uns Gott dem Herren	Vincent Lübeck (1654-1740)
Toccatà in F Major, BWV 540	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Messe pour les Couvents Offertoire sur les grands jeux	François Couperin (1668-1733)

INTERMISSION

Suite, Op. 5 Prelude	Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)
A Solemn Melody	Sir Henry Walford Davies (1869-1941)
Pièces de Fantaisie, Op. 53 Clair de lune	Louis Vierne (1870-1937)
Esquisses Byzantines Tu es petra	Henri Mulet (1878-1967)

PROGRAM NOTES

Paso en Do Major; Narciso Casanovas (1747-1799)

Casanovas became a Benedictine monk at Montserrat at the age of 16 and remained there for most of his life. While active as a composer, he was also highly regarded as a fine organist. His keyboard music is typical of his contemporaries and is often written in an idiom more suited for harpsichord than organ. Few of his pieces are liturgical in nature and the majority of his works fall into two categories: quasi-fugal and one-movement bipartite sonatas. The fugal *Paso in Do Major* is light in texture, quite animated and lively. A *paso* is a Hispanic dance in moderately fast meter with a somewhat march-like character.

Nun laßt uns Gott dem Herren; Vincent Lübeck (1654-1740)

Lübeck, the son of an organist, was familiar with the organ from an early age. In 1673, at the age of 19, he was appointed organist in Stade, and in 1702 at St.

Nicholas's in Hamburg. Lübeck's compositions consist of works for the organ, several choir cantatas and a *Clavier Übung* (keyboard practice). His style clearly shows the influence of his contemporary Dietrich Buxtehude, along with the North German school of organ composition, which utilized florid passage work, double pedal writing, echo effects, etc.

The partita on *Nun laßt* consists of six variations, each using different variation techniques of the North German school of organ composition. Each produces an imaginative melodic and harmonic rendering of the chorale. Generally the work is considered to be unfinished; i.e., it contains no large-scale final movement. The work is completed in this evening's performance by a five-voice chorale of the Lutheran hymn on which the variations are based.

Toccatà in F Major, BWV 540; Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Written while Bach was the Director of Music for the four Lutheran churches in Leipzig, the F Major Toccata abandons the fantastic and improvisatory character of earlier composed toccatas in favor of a logical and well balanced construction. The work begins with an introductory section over a sustained pedal tone, followed by an extended pedal solo. The introductory section is then restated in C major, bringing the opening material to an end. A development section follows, consisting of four subdivisions. The final section resembles a restatement of the first section, leading to another long-held pedal tone supporting a figuration in the hands in which the ascending motive of the beginning is inverted. In spite of the piece's gigantic proportions (over 400 measures) the effect of the work is one of consistence and balance.

Offertoire sur les grands jeux from Messe pour les Couvents; François Couperin (1668-1733)

By the age of 17, Couperin was organist at St. Gervais, Paris, and at 25 one of the four organists of the royal chapel at Versailles. His work as a teacher resulted in the creation of his *L'art de toucher le clavecin* (The art of playing the harpsichord) of 1716, which has become a work essential to understanding the music of that period. Couperin's compositions include not only works for organ (two mass settings), but many works for harpsichord and chamber ensembles.

The *Offertoire sur les grands jeux* translates literally as "offertory on big stops." This composition consists of several contrasting sections that include compositional techniques such as alternation between different keyboards; melody on one keyboard with accompaniment on another; sections in contrasting meters and tempos; and echo effects. The predominant sound of the *grands jeux* was a reed sound supported by foundation stops.

Prelude from Suite, Op. 5; Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

The French organist and composer Duruflé was a pupil of Tournemire and Gigout and enjoyed a career as an organist both in Paris and in numerous concert tours abroad. In 1930, he was appointed the organist of St Etienne-du-Mont, a post he shared with his wife, Marie-Madeleine Duruflé-Chevalier. In 1975, the Duruflés were involved in a near-fatal car accident while driving home. Madame Duruflé eventually recovered, however, Monsieur Duruflé never fully recovered, and his professional career as an organist and composer came to an abrupt end.

The *Prelude* from Duruflé's *Suite, Op. 5*, which is quite somber in nature, maintains its brooding character by sustaining the dominant of E-flat minor. Duruflé creates a sense of something almost ominous awaiting the listener. A single theme, presented in three successive expositions, gradually accumulates power until the organ is heard at its fullest. A final section consisting of a long recitative develops the first notes of the theme, hushed, contemplative, and profoundly poignant.

A Solemn Melody; Sir Henry Walford Davies (1869-1941)

Born in Oswestry, Shropshire, England, Davies served as organist for St. George's, Kensington, St. Anne's, Soho, and Christ Church, Hamstead. In 1898 he was appointed as Organist and Choirmaster of The Temple Church, London. In 1924, he made his first radio broadcast to schools with what was to become a popular and influential radio series entitled *Music and the Ordinary Listener*. Likely better known as a broadcaster than a composer, Davies also served as Director of Music to the Royal Air Force and following the death of Edward Elgar, was appointed Master of the King's Musick. He was a prolific composer of music for cathedral and church choirs including hymn tunes, oratorios and choral suites.

The *Solemn Melody* was originally written in 1908 for organ and strings. The arrangement for this evening's concert is by Roy Perry, who for over 40 years served as Organist/Choirmaster at the First Presbyterian Church in Kilgore, Texas. Renowned both as an organist and organ designer, Perry was also a sensitive composer and arranger. For many years, he served as representative for the Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company throughout the United States.

Claire de lune from Pièces de Fantaisie, Op. 53; Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

Although nearly blind, Vierne was one of the foremost organists of the early 20th Century. He studied with Cesar Franck and Charles-Marie Widor and was appointed organist at Notre Dame in 1900. He remained at Notre Dame until June 2, 1937, when he suffered a fatal heart attack at the organ console while performing his 1,750th recital. His works include six symphonies for organ, various works for orchestra as well as compositions for chorus.

The *Pièces de Fantaisie* are short compositions with descriptive titles used to indicate their contents. Titles include *March nuptiale* (Nuptial march), *Sur le Rhin* (On the Rhine), *Fantomes* (Phantoms), *Naiades* (Water nymphs). The title itself, *Clair de lune* (Moonlight) indicates a spiritual affinity to French musical impressionism, clearly heard in the music.

Tu es petra from Esquisses Byzantines; Henri Mulet (1878-1967)

The *Byzantine Sketches* (1920) are Mulet's preeminent composition for organ. Mulet dedicates the work to the "Basilique du Sacre-Coeur de Montmartre, 1914-1919." These dates do not refer to the period of construction of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart itself, but to the shelling of Paris during the First World War, an ordeal Mulet himself endured.

Of the ten sketches, the first five are named for physical features of the basilica (nave, stained glass, rose window, crypt, bell tower) and the remaining movements are descriptive of ceremonies or events performed within the church. The tenth sketch, *Tu es petra et portae inferi non praevalerunt adversus te*, bears the text of Matthew 16:18, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the

gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This stands as a powerful statement of the invincibility of faith and truth in the face of evil and the destruction of war.



ABOUT THE ORGANIST

Jon Stuber is the Organist/Choirmaster at First Presbyterian Church, Portland. He earned his DMA and MM degrees from the University of Texas in Austin and his BM from Baylor University. At First Presbyterian, Jon conducts the Chamber and Chancel Choirs and the Adult Handbell Choir as well as playing the organ at all worship services. In addition to his duties at the church, Dr. Stuber has performed locally with the David York Ensemble, the Novum Chamber Singers, Belle Voci Women's Chorus and the Alder Street Chamber Players.



ABOUT THE ARTS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

First Presbyterian Church offers music programs for every age and interest. Our 69-rank Jaeckel pipe organ accompanies congregational and choral singing every Sunday at worship in addition to providing an outstanding venue for organ recitals. Choirs include the Chancel Choir and the Chamber Choir for adults, the Youth Choir for middle and high school grades, the Children's Choir for those in third through fifth grades and the Cherub Choir for kindergarten through second grades. Each of these choirs is open to all who are interested in singing in Sunday worship and special services on a regular basis. The instrumental music program at FPC includes the Adult Handbell Choir, the Alder Street Chamber Players and the Alder Street Woodwind Quintet. Brass groups and ensembles with a mix of instruments are also formed from time to time. These instrumental ensembles play regularly in Sunday worship and other services and also are performing on this recital series.

In Chapel Hall, FPC's Visual Arts program presents guest artist shows, sponsors an annual juried exhibit called "Works of Faith," and offers "Gifts of the Spirit. " The Visual Arts program also hosts exhibits of works of FPC members and friends, and workshops led by nationally acclaimed artists. The current exhibit, "Cross Crucible," features paintings, wall sculptures, and processional and pectoral crosses by Joel Nickel, pastor of Calvary Lutheran in Stayton. Art exhibits are open before, after and during intermission of tonight's concert and every weekday from 11:00 am until 3:00 pm and on Sundays from 9:00 am until noon. There is no charge for Visual Arts events.



TO JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

To receive postcards about upcoming recitals, please add your name to our mailing list by filling out the form available at the ticket desk in the Chapel foyer.