



Presents

An MSM Organ Recital

Christian Copeley, *organist*

Sonata No. 2 in E minor, Op. 19 (1850)

August Gottfried Ritter
(1811-1885)

Trio Sonata No. 4 in E minor, BWV 528

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Partita on “Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten”

Georg Böhm
(1661-1733)

Pastorale, Op. 19 (1868)

César Franck
(1822-1890)

Prelude and Fugue No. 3 in G minor, Op. 7 (1920)

Marcel Dupré
(1886-1971)

The Basilica of the Sacred Heart
Saturday, May 8th, 2021, 7:30 PM

This is a degree recital for the Master of Sacred Music.
*Sacred Music at Notre Dame prohibits the unauthorized recording, publication, and streaming of live performances.
Please silence all electronic devices.*

Program Notes

Sonata No. 2 in E minor, Op. 19 - Beginning with some German repertoire, this sonata is the work of Ritter, a nineteenth-century composer from Erfurt. Ritter was a renowned organ virtuoso in Germany, and despite his skill as a performer, he decided to pursue a career in church music. This sonata is one of his over 120 works, most of which were written for organ. Throughout this work, Ritter employs a variety of textures and compositional techniques. Perhaps most notably, there is a mysterious theme that occurs near the beginning and then recurs near the end with a more majestic character, nicely bookending the composition.

Trio Sonata No. 4 in E minor, BWV 528 - A master of both keyboard technique and composition, J.S. Bach is said to have written the trio sonatas for Wilhelm Friedemann, his eldest son. Part of a collection of six pieces, this sonata has many admirable qualities. Just like the others, it has three movements, each with its own unique sound. The first one has a sophisticated introduction and then becomes livelier. In a dramatic character shift, the second movement transports the listener to another world with its contemplative nature. To wrap up the set, Bach employs a light and playful texture in the third movement. The contrasting styles of each section make this sonata both a joy to hear as well as rewarding to play.

Partita on “Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten” - This partita comes from Georg Böhm, who is perhaps most notable for influencing J.S. Bach and developing the chorale *partite*. It is based on a hymn by Georg Neumark that translates from German as “Who only lets dear God rule.” Over the course of its seven variations, the tune employs a wide variety of styles. Each iteration of the hymn has a unique character, from lyrical, to elegant, confident, flowing, feisty, fancy, and energizing. These various ideas become apparent through tempo changes, ornamentation, and articulation, making for a very dynamic piece.

Pastorale, Op. 19 - Moving on to the French school of music, this pastorale is the work of Franck, who was born in Belgium. His early life was fraught with difficulties, as his father exploited his talents by having him perform a series of concerts across European cities, including Brussels, Aachen, and Liège. This eventually led him to break away and make a name for himself as he secured a church position in 1847 as organist of Notre Dame de Lorette in Paris. More importantly, in 1858 he began his major church position as organist at St. Clotilde, where he worked for the remainder of his life. Franck’s pastorale illustrates the peaceful side of his compositions while it also explores a mischievous and stormy character halfway through the piece. After going through a series of developments, the storm gradually ceases, and the soothing theme returns to finish the piece.

Prelude and Fugue No. 3 in G minor, Op. 7 – Dupré composed two sets of three preludes and fugues, and this piece comes from his earlier set. He followed a long tradition of great French organists and was an incredibly talented musician, from securing a job as St. Vivien’s organist at the young age of twelve, to his masterful skill of improvisation. It is no wonder that he was so successful given his education at the Paris Conservatoire, studying with Guilmant, Vierne, and Widor. This work showcases Dupré’s imaginative compositional style. The prelude employs an elaborate chromatic texture with soaring melodies while the fugue has a driving rhythm and rich harmonies, all of which make for an exhilarating listening experience.