

SECULAR SKETCHES

PROGRAM

SACRED ILLUMINATIONS

La Nativité from *Poèmes Évangéliques d'après les texts sacrés*
Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

In a humble manger, on a mild night, Mary and Joseph await the birth of Christ the Lord. The child is born, the celestial innocent, and the graceful appearance of a star makes the event known to the shepherds of Bethlehem. Shepherds, having come to the nursery, offer tender melodies in adoration to the Jesus child. Then, the Holy Family is pictured in the quiet peace of the Lord.

Joie et Clarté des Corps Glorieux from *Les Corps Glorieux*
Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)

*Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.
Let anyone with ears listen! (St. Matthew XIII:43)*

Crucifixion from *Symphonie-Passion* Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)

The 3rd movement of the Symphonie-Passion, first conceived as an improvisation on the Grand Court organ of the Wannamaker Store in Philadelphia, paints a vivid tonal picture of the pain and brutality of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The composition ends with a weeping motive, perhaps signifying the tears and the intense sorrow of Mary.

Mors et resurrectio from *Trois Paraphrases Grégoriennes*
Jean Langlais

*"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"
(1st Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians XV:55)*

The Thunder Storm [sic], Opus 108 – Descriptive for the Organ
Thomas Philander Ryder, Jr. (1836-1887)

Thomas Ryder was the first composer in America to write a storm piece for organ, a genre that developed as an outgrowth of improvisations and composed pieces based on themes of battles and of the Last Judgment. It begins by setting a pastoral mood, followed by the imitation of the sounds of a bagpipe. During this, thunder intrudes through use of note clusters in the pedals and the manuals as well as half drawn stops. The storm breaks loose on the full organ with agitated writing in the manuals and a deep pedal tremolando. After the thunder subsides, Ryder concludes with the then popular "Vesper Hymn," "Now on Land and Sea Descending," representing the people giving thanks to God for being delivered from the storm.

Fountain Reverie Percy Eastman Fletcher (1879-1932)

Known primarily for his aptitude as a "light" music composer, Fletcher wrote for band, orchestra, voice, piano, and organ. Despite a tremendous output and great popularity in his time, Fletcher has sadly become almost completely forgotten. His day-dreamy Fountain Reverie captures the spirit of the late Victorian era, with a flowing right hand motive which evokes an image of rippling water, balanced with a sweet, yet hauntingly beautiful melody in the left hand.

To Call My True Love to My Dance (2007) Naji Hakim (b.1955)

Theme: Allegro

Variation I: Cantabile

Variation II: Valse

Variation III: Deciso

Variation IV: Arabesque

Variation V: Burletta

Variation VI: Tango

Variation VII: Scherzando

(Variation VI is then repeated)

Variation VIII: Berceuse

Variation IX: Finale

This piece is based on a Danish song "Vil du danse med mig?" (Will you dance with me?) by author and composer Hanne Kurup. It consists of a set of 10 much contrasted variations. The title "To Call My True Love To My Dance" is quoted from a Christmas carol: "Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day." This composition was commissioned by Faythe Freese, Professor of Organ at the University of Alabama.

Upcoming concerts

Sunday, Feb. 13, 2:30 pm

Notebook for Johann Sebastian Bach

American organist Dana Robinson pieces together the many influences on Bach's writing for the organ, creating a sonic notebook of baroque music on the Fritts and Traeri organs.

Sunday, March 6, 2:30 pm

The King of Instruments in the Service of Kings

Throughout history, the organ has added splendor to ceremonial occasions as a manifestation of power and opulence. Goldman professor of organ Kimberly Marshall concludes the 2010-11 series with tales of collaboration from five centuries.

HOMER FERGUSON

ORGAN

SUMMER SKETCHES
AND SACRED ILLUMINATIONS

JANUARY 30, 2011

2:30 PM

ASU ORGAN HALL