

Knoxville Chapter of the American Guild of Organists
Members' Recital
November 2, 2020, 7:30 PM

~ Program ~

- Carillon de Westminster (Pièces de Fantaisie, op. 55 no. 6)* Louis Vierne (1870-1937)
Peter Van Eenam
Westminster Presbyterian Church
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- Les Cloches de Perros-Guirec (Suite Bretonne, opus 21)* Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)
Rob Lynch
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church
- Carillon* Eric DeLamarter (1880-1953)
Karl Jacob
Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
- Bells* Daniel Pinkham (1923-2006)
Frances Butler
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- Fugue sur le Thème du Carillon de la Cathédrale de Soissons* Maurice Durufé (1902-1986)
John Brock
Professor of Music Emeritus, University of Tennessee
- Holsworthy Church Bells* Samuel S. Wesley (1810-1876)
Hyunju Lee
Sacred Heart Catholic Cathedral
- Carillon de Longpont* Louis Vierne
Jason Overall
St. John's Episcopal Cathedral
- The Bells of St. Anne de Beaupré (St. Lawrence Sketches)* Alexander Russell (1880-1953)
Trey Daugherty
St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church
- Carillon-Sortie* Henri Mulet (1878-1967)
Edie Johnson
Church Street United Methodist Church

~ Program Notes ~

Louis Vierne's *Carillon de Westminster* is the final piece of set III of the 24 Pièces de Fantaisie, a cycle written between 1926 and 1927. Dedicated to the British organbuilder Henry Willis, this piece is perhaps Vierne's most famous work. The familiar Westminster chime, presented in both the alto and soprano voices within the first 58 bars, eventually appears in the bass (in B-flat) and is developed through the use of augmented chord and minor mode harmony before reappearing at full organ in pentatonic harmony.

Perros-Guirec, a seaside resort on the coast of Brittany, has long attracted artists and persons of letters. It is home to a church with a campanile, which may have provided the inspiration for Marcel Dupré's *Cloches de Perros-Guirec*, the third and final movement of his Suite Bretonne (Suite of Brittany). More scherzo than *final*, this movement uses grace notes and chord repetition to evoke the sound of a tolling bell, which in turn provides background to a gypsy-like theme in the natural form of the minor mode. A lovely cantabile treatment of the theme in the middle of the piece provides contrast to the opening and closing staccato chords.

Eric DeLamarter became organist of Chicago's Fourth Presbyterian Church in 1915 and was assistant conductor of the Chicago Symphony from 1918 to 1933. A friend of Leo Sowerby and a champion of his music, he commissioned and gave the premiere performance of Sowerby's *Come Autumn Time*. His *Carillon*, written in 1919, is a winsome melody lushly harmonized in G major. The chimes of the organ make their appearance in the middle of the piece and at the end, in the pedal part.

While a short work – only two pages in length -- Daniel Pinkham's *Bells* is a model of craft and economy of means. Harmonically complex, it presents 11 of the 12 semitones of the chromatic scale within the first two measures. The descending whole step in the left hand is transferred to the soprano voice midway through, giving balance to what is essentially a two-part invention.

Maurice Duruflé's *Fugue*, opus 12, a late work dating from 1962, first appeared in a collection of pieces published in recognition of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of Louis Vierne. A musical souvenir of sorts, it is dedicated to Henri Doyen, organist of Soissons Cathedral, and is based on the hourly bell peal of that church (where both Duruflé and his wife Marie Madeleine made a recording of Bach organ works). The counterpoint doesn't follow the typical exposition of an organ fugue; a countersubject, for example, appears in conjunction with the fugal subject at the outset, along with a pedal tone tied over ten bars. The buildup of the organ over time is generated not only by the addition of additional stops but also by the addition of extra voices, appearing in increasingly complex figurations. The theme makes final appearances in augmentation and in block chord disposition.

The delightful *Holsworthy Church Bells* of S. S. Wesley is an andante voluntary in the style of Mendelssohn, followed by a variation that ornaments the melody using sixteenth notes in the left hand. The bell motif, which appears as a descending scale in the soprano voice, is in 6/8 time. The final four bars abandon the semiquavers of the accompaniment, returning to the homophonic texture of the original air.

Louis Vierne was frequently invited to the town of Longpont as a guest of the Montesquiou family. On one of those visits, in August of 1913, he was inspired to write the Carillon in B-flat after hearing the four bells in the church tower. The bell tower of the Longpont church was destroyed in 1917 and because one of the bells was not replaced during reconstruction, the famous air can no longer be played. The piece was later dedicated to Vierne's brother René, killed on the 29th of May in 1918, not far from Longpont.

Alexander Russell was born in Franklin, Tennessee and studied at Syracuse University before going to Berlin and Paris for post-graduate work. He eventually became the organist of Wanamaker's Department Store in Philadelphia, where he parlayed his connections with the touring luminaries who came to play the Grand Court organ to form a concert organists' roster (which later became Bernard LaBerge Management and ultimately Karen McFarlane Artists today). As a composer he is known for the four St. Lawrence Sketches (The Citadel at Quebec, The Bells of St. Anne de Beaupré, Song of the Basket Weaver, and Up the Saguenay). Beaupré, a small town 35 miles downriver of Quebec City, is home to the cathedral-sized church of St. Anne, a pilgrimage site for healing.

This particular sketch makes use of both the tubular chime and the harp stop of the organ (when available), the better to highlight the sweeping arpeggios in the left hand. As in Dupré's "Cloches," thumbing-down technique for the tubular chimes is a one of many means used to create atmosphere.

Henri Mulet, son of the choirmaster of the Basilica of Sacré-Coeur of Montmartre in Paris, is best known as a composer for his *Carillon-Sortie* and for the collection ten pieces known as *Esquisses Byzantines*. Five of the pieces in this latter collection drew inspiration from the architectural style of the Romanesque-Byzantine basilica (Vitrail, Rosace, Chapelle des Morts, etc.). The *Carillon-Sortie*, in contrast, is all bright light and high-spirited toccata. The sixteenth-note ostinato figure accompanying the opening LH melody becomes a perpetuum mobile of sorts, building excitement toward the end by moving into sextuplet and thirty-second note rhythm.

The Knoxville Chapter of the American Guild of Organists wishes to thank the Cathedral of St. John and especially the audio-visual staff, Paul Ruff and Nathan Tipton for the production of this recital.

The Chapter also gratefully acknowledges the donors to the 2020-2021 concert series.

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