

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY  
SUNDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2021 | 3 PM  
Bruce Neswick, *organ*

IMPROVISATION ON A SUBMITTED THEME

TOCCATA IN E MAJOR, BWV 566 (11")

J.S. Bach  
(1685-1750)

The *Tocatta in E Major* is an early work of Bach and a very clear indication of the composer's indebtedness to the multi-sectional prelude of his precursor Dietrich Buxtehude. While this four-movement fantasy may lack the contrapuntal sophistication of Bach's mature works, it more than makes up for it in radiant momentum.

THREE PRELUDES AND FUGUES, Op. 16 (12")

Clara Schumann  
(1819-1896)

- I. G Minor*
- II. B-flat Major*
- III. D Minor*

Much has been written about (and will continue to be written about) the romantic and musical partnership of one of the great power couples of all time – Robert and Clara Schumann. Clara was one of the most important musical artists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, playing piano solo and chamber music recitals all over Europe to great acclaim. Her teaching was legendary and far-reaching, and, in the years before her husband's premature death in 1856, she was drawn to the art of composition. Though small in number and largely confined to the piano (solo or in tandem with other instruments), her works, coupled with the resurgence of interest in her life and career over the past 50 years, have given rise to the question of how her compositional career might have developed further had she had fewer pressures on her time. There are three preludes and fugues in the Op. 16 set, and, while they were not originally conceived for the organ, they transcribe well for the King of Instruments. The Schumanns were, in some ways, guardians of the past, exhibiting a life-long interest in earlier musical eras, in general, and in the art of counterpoint (the intertwining of musical voices), in particular. Their interest in and study of the organ was another mark of their devotion to tradition. The inherent restraint conveyed by this attention to classical forms and styles translates well to the organ, a medium that tends to favor moderation over virtuosity.

Ma\$HeD (2016) (7")

Texu Kim  
(b. 1980)

Texu Kim has been the Composer-in-Residence of the Korean Symphony Orchestra, based in his native Seoul, and is currently Assistant Professor of Composition at San Diego State University. A graduate of Indiana University (where he won the coveted Dean's Prize in Composition), Dr. Kim is also a graduate of Seoul National University. About his new work, the composer writes:

Ma\$HeD was commissioned by Mark Pacoe and St. Malachy's Church ("The Actors' Chapel") in New York City for the 2016 Paul Creston Award Celebration Concert, in memory of Margaret 'Peggy' Pugh, honoring Pulitzer and Grammy award winning composer Jennifer Higdon, 2016 recipient of the Paul Creston Award. To be more faithful to the purpose of this event, I quoted Jennifer Higdon's energetic piece *Smash*, as well as Paul Creston's *Psalm XXIII* and *Now Thank We All Our God*: all three pieces were on the same program. It is my observation of the organ improvisation tradition that improvisateurs frequently take themes from other pieces in the same program. Bruce Neswick, who was the 2010 awardee of the Paul Creston Award and who premiered this piece, has introduced this tradition to me. I have

therefore incorporated some of his improvisational style in the beginning of the piece, though everything is written down. All these ideas and influences are interwoven or 'mashed up' into a 7-minute extravaganza.

AIR (from *Suite No. 1*) (3.5")

Florence Price  
(1887-1953)

Florence Price, a prolific composer of orchestral, chamber, choral, piano and organ music, grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas. Studying at the New England Conservatory of Music, in Boston, and subsequently serving on the faculty of Atlanta's Clark University, Price eventually settled in Chicago. There, in the Windy City, her compositional career took flight. Her Symphony No. 1 (first of four) was premiered shortly after its completion by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1933, marking the first time the music of an African-American woman had been featured by a major orchestra. Price's Suite No. 1 dates from 1942, and its four movements have an unabashedly romantic flair about them. The third movement, simply titled Air, offers its principal theme straightaway, then develops it within a richly chromatic (i.e., with notes outside the major scale) harmonic framework.

TE DEUM LAUDAMUS (1981) (30")

David Hurd  
(b. 1950)

*Toccata – The Acknowledgment*  
*Four Fantasies – The Adoration*  
*Recitative and Hymn – The Humbling*  
*Introduction, Fugue and Chaconne – The Opening of Heaven*

David Hurd, eminent composer and recitalist, is the Organist and Music Director of the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, in New York City. His large, four-movement work *Te Deum laudamus* was commissioned by and dedicated to Larry King, former Organist-Choirmaster of Trinity Church, Wall Street. About his work the composer writes:

TOCCATA – THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT uses the traditional solemn tone for the first verse of the Latin hymn *Te Deum* as a cantus firmus in the bass. The two phrases of the chant form the opening and closing sections of this movement while the middle section is a short fugue based on the melody of the first phrase.

FOUR FANTASIES – THE ADORATION is really four sketches strung together, each representing one of the four bodies of persons or souls which offer praise to God in the hymn *Te Deum*. The apostles' praise is cast in twelve-tone procedure. The outer portions of this ABA section make reference to the cantus firmus mostly through sustaining of the pitches of the chant melody as they occur in the order of the row. The prophets' praise utilizes the whole-tone scale mostly in ascending thirds. The shape of the chant melody can be recognized in the fugal episodes of this section. The martyrs' praise is characterized by boldly juxtaposed major triads. Like the section immediately before it, the martyrs' praise utilizes the chant melody in fragments, treating it in rhythmic patterns. The Holy Church's praise is heralded by the same fanfare used to begin the first movement. In this five-voice section the cantus firmus is stated by the upper pedal voice.

RECITATIVE AND HYMN – THE HUMBLING begins as an improvisatory flute solo line. In the central section of this movement fragments of the chant melody and recitative are in dialogue. The final section brings the recitative together with the Christmas hymn *Divinum mysterium* ("Of the Father's love begotten"), the melody of which occurs in the upper pedal voice.

INTRODUCTION, FUGUE AND CHACONNE – THE OPENING OF HEAVEN begins as *Dies irae* and *Victimae paschali* – two ancient Latin sequences respectively speaking of death and life – are pitted against one another in jagged rhythm and fiery red color. At the peak of combat, a short cadenza re-introduces the tone row of the apostles' praise (from the second movement) and climaxes with a recollection of a now altered form of the fanfare figure heard before in the first and second movements. The Chaconne emerges quietly out of the combat. The fifteen variations on a ground, derived from the apostles' praise, call to remembrance the various melodies, textures and colors of all that has gone before in this and other movements, casting it all upward in a triumphant crescendo toward Christ in glory at the right hand of God.

## IMPROVISATION ON A SUBMITTED THEME

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BRUCE NESWICK is the Canon for Music at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Portland, Oregon. Prior to coming to Oregon, he served as Associate Professor of Music in Organ and Sacred Music at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University and Assistant Organist of St. Francis in the Fields Episcopal Church, Louisville, Kentucky. Before moving to Indiana, he was the Director of Music at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, where he directed the Cathedral Choir of Girls, Boys and Adults and had oversight of the musical life of that historic Cathedral.

Active in the field of church music, Mr. Neswick holds the Fellowship degree from the Royal School of Church Music, for whom he has conducted several courses for boy and girl choristers. He has served on the faculties of and performed for several church music conferences, including Master Schola, the Mississippi Conference, the Association of Anglican Musicians, Westminster Choir College Summer Session, the Montreat and Westminster Conferences of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, the Disciples of Christ Musicians, the Conference of Lutheran Church Musicians, the Sewanee Church Music Conference, Organ Alive! and the Evergreen Conference. In recent years, he has performed at St. Florian Abbey, in Austria, as part of the annual BrucknerFest; at the Eastman Rochester Organ Initiative conference; and at the Yale Organ Week.

Mr. Neswick has been commissioned to compose for dozens of performers and churches throughout the United States, and his organ and choral music is published by Paraclete, Augsburg-Fortress, Selah, Vivace, Hope, Plymouth and St. James' presses. Mr. Neswick's skill at improvisation garnered him three first prizes from the 1989 San Anselmo Organ Festival; the 1990 American Guild of Organists' national convention in Boston; and the 1992 Rochette Concours at the Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva, Switzerland.

A graduate of Pacific Lutheran University and of the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, Mr. Neswick's teachers have included Robert Baker, David Dahl, Gerre Hancock, Margaret Irwin-Brandon and Lionel Rogg. A Fellow of the American Guild of Organists, Mr. Neswick has served the Guild in many capacities, including chapter dean, regional convention chair, regional education coordinator, member of the national nominating committee and member of the national improvisation competition committee. He was recently awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee.

As a recitalist, Mr. Neswick has performed extensively throughout the United States and Europe and has been a frequent performer at national and regional conventions of the American Guild of Organists. In 1994, he played the opening convocation for the national AGO convention held in Dallas, Texas, and he was a featured artist at the national AGO conventions in Seattle (in 2000), Washington, DC (in 2010) and Boston (in 2014). Mr. Neswick is represented by Phillip Truckenbrod Concert Artists.