



Claremont Graduate University

CGU Concerts

May 15, 2022, 4:00 p.m.
Claremont United Church of Christ
233 Harrison Ave., Claremont

Lynnette Ball McGee
organ

Organ: Glatter-Götz/Rosales, 1998

Program

Epistle Sonata, Op. 1304

Carson Cooman
(1982-)

Concerto for Organ, Hob. XVIII-1

Franz Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Sonata da Chiesa sopra un Tema di Claudio Monteverdi

John Gardner
(1917-2011)

Concerto en sol mineur pour orgue, orchestra à cordes et timbales

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1961)

Orchestra Personnel

Marlin Owen, *conductor*

violin

Hector Gonzalez
Zun-Hin Woo
Joycelyn Chiu
Joy Sinclair
Leonora Wagner

viola

Leahwen Torres
Leehyeon Keun

cello

Daniel Jow
Jiayi Qin
Isaac Liu

bass

Ethan Reed

oboe

Maralynne Mann
Victoria Lee

bassoon

John Gonzalez

trumpet

David Pittel
David Costello

timpani

Nicholas Sapper

This concert is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree for Mrs. McGee.

Please turn off cell phones.

Program Notes

Commissioned by Anna and Erik Meyer, the *Epistle Sonata* was composed in 2018 by American composer Carson Cooman. The title of the work comes from W. A. Mozart's chamber works written for use in religious services in Salzburg. Cooman's piece, however, has nothing to do with Mozart or the Salzburg mass. Rather it takes the title as inspiration for a multi-sectional sonata connecting the idea of the *epistle* itself, such as the letters written by the Apostle Paul. The good news is musically proclaimed, beginning with an invocation, followed by sections of varied character, all with bright and optimistic tone. Throughout the piece, the listener may imagine the joy of the people of Ephesus as they heard the Gospel message of hope and salvation.

The Concerto for Organ, Hob. XVIII, was likely composed in 1756. It is the first of the keyboard concertos composed by Franz Joseph Haydn. This tuneful early work demonstrates Haydn's budding compositional style, leading to more than 100 symphonies composed in his lifetime. This particular concerto was written prior to Haydn's appointment as *Kappelmeister* at the court of Esterházy, located outside of Vienna.

Haydn adapts the old *sinfonia avanti l'opera* model of two lively movements bookending a slow movement. The opening *ripieno* introduces the thematic material, after which the organ presents its own embellished version of the material. The orchestra responds with discreet musical interjections.

The second movement, marked, *Largo*, features lyrical, reaching melodic figures, heard first in the violins, and repeated in subsequent organ solos and tutti. The second part of the movement begins on the dominant and winds its way back to the tonic by new motives and development, concluding with a cadenza.

Trumpets and oboes return in the final movement. This lively movement, composed in triple meter, features delightful episodes, driving rhythms, and echoes.

Composer John Gardner was born in Manchester, England. Gardner began his organ studies with hopes of winning the organ scholarship to Exeter College, Oxford. His endeavor proved successful. In addition to composing much music for solo organ, he has also written music for brass and organ.

Sonata da Chiesa sopra un Tema di Claudio Monteverdi (Church Sonata on a Theme by Claudio Monteverdi), was inspired by a simple five-note ascending and descending motif from Monteverdi's opera, *L'Orfeo*. Gardner heard this motif while watching a television program in which a trumpeter was shown walking around an Italian villa playing it on a Baroque trumpet. This melodic outline forms the basis for most every melodic idea in the piece. From this small piece of musical material, Gardner creates a four-movement work of melodic interest and rhythmic vitality.

Francis Poulenc was part of the culture of Paris between the wars, and one of an informal group of composers known as "*Les Six*." Poulenc's early music drew upon the spirit and music of the Parisian music halls and theaters. The Parisians embraced the witty and irreverent humor of his early compositions.

The *Concerto for Organ, Strings, and Timpani* was dedicated to Princess Edmond de Polignac. In 1932, the Princess, an American by birth and heiress to the Singer Sewing Machine fortune, commissioned Poulenc to compose a concerto for two pianos and orchestra. Poulenc delivered a light-hearted work, much to her delight. Soon after, she commissioned another concerto, this time one for the organ and small orchestra. Poulenc had not written for the organ before. He sought the assistance of the great French organist and composer, Maurice Duruflé, who offered his expertise with registration and technical issues. Although the Princess had hopes for another light-hearted piece, such a work did not materialize.

The political climate in Europe during the mid-1930's cast its dark shadow over Poulenc. This, coupled with the death of a friend in 1936, left Poulenc in a deep depression. During this time, he rediscovered his Christian faith. He fully immersed himself in the study of church music, particularly the works of J.S. Bach and Dieterich Buxtehude. The influence of these two composers is apparent in the overall form of his organ concerto. Poulenc adapts the early Baroque sectional *fantasia* structure of Buxtehude, internally dividing the concerto into seven contrasting sections. He pays his respect to J.S. Bach by basing the opening theme on Bach's famous *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor*. During the course of the work, we hear both Poulenc's playful side and serious side, moving the listener from epoch grandeur to introspection, gaiety, and lyricism. In 1939, the piece was premiered in Paris by Maurice Duruflé, and has become a favorite in the organ concerto repertoire.