James Welch
Organist in Concert

Christ Church in Canton, Ohio
Sunday, October 20, 2019, 4:00pm
“A Return to Paris”

Toccata parisienne
Rulon Christiansen
b. 1949

Toccata in F major
Johann Sebastian Bach
1685-1750

Nessun dorma, from Turandot
Giacomo Puccini/arr. James Welch
1858-1924

Choral in B minor
César Franck
1822-1890

Ronde française
Léon Boëllmann
1862-1897

The audience is invited to contribute to the expenses of this concert series by making contributions as the ushers circulate the offering plates at this time.

Intermission

Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella
Denis Bédard
b. 1950

Méditation
Maurice Duruflé
1902-1986

An American in Paris
George Gershwin
1898-1937

Les petites cloches
Richard Purvis
1913-1994

From Symphony No. 1 (1899)
Allegro vivace
Andante
Final
Louis Vierne
1870-1937

The public is invited to greet the artist following the concert at a reception in Westminster Hall.
Special thanks to Jennifer George, Director of Children’s and Family Ministries, for offering this amenity.
James Welch Biography

James Welch is University Organist of Santa Clara University. He also serves as organist of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto. He received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ performance from Stanford University, with further studies in France and Austria. He has concertized internationally, with performances in such prestigious venues as Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, the Leipzig Gewandhaus, National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City. He has also performed and taught in Beijing, Taipei, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Jerusalem. A specialist in Latin American organ music, he received a Fulbright award to perform and conduct research in Brazil; since then he has performed in Mexico and edited three volumes of organ music by Mexican composers. The author of a major new biography, Richard Purvis, Organist of Grace, he has performed at conventions of the American Guild of Organists and at the International Congress of Organists; his articles have appeared in The American Organist and The Diapason; and he has released numerous CDs, recorded on a variety of organs. www.welchorganist.com

The Gibbs-Preyer Sanctuary Organ

The Christ Church Sanctuary Organ is a distinctive instrument built by the Schantz Organ Company of Orrville, Ohio. Given by Mr. and Mrs. Alvin J. Gibbs and Mrs. Frederick W. Preyer in memory of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Gibbs, the organ was built in 1952 as a major phase of Christ Church’s renovation and expansion program. After many revisions and additions, the 1996 tonal rebuild and enlargement sought to bring about a return to the original American Classic tonal design of 1952. The original instrument of 1952 contained 59 ranks. The organ as it now stands is comprised of five divisions with a total of 72 ranks.

Under the wise and prudent stewardship of the Trustees of Christ Church, the complete re-leathering and chest rebuilding of each division of the organ (Choir, Solo, Great, Pedal, and finally Swell) was systematically financed and executed over the period of 1996 to 2003 by the Schantz Company. In the summer of 2008, the Schantz Organ Company built a completely new four-manual console with solid-state digital components. With greatly expanded devices for more flexible and creative use of the organ, there are now 105 drawknobs, 31 tilting coupler tabs, 63 thumb pistons, 31 toe studs, 256 levels of digital memory, with MIDI-control technology.

Christ Presbyterian Church Staff

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FUTURE EVENTS IN THE CHRIST CHURCH MUSIC SERIES

CHORAL EVENSONG
Christ Church Chancel Choir
Sunday, November 17, 2019, 4:00pm

In this season of Thanksgiving, the Christ Church Chancel Choir will offer a Choral Evensong with that theme in mind, presenting music of Stanford and Parry. As a prelude, the Choir will present a creative masterpiece of Thanksgiving, *Rejoice in the Lamb* by Benjamin Britten.

CHRISTMAS & EPIPHANY MADRIGAL FEAST
Akron Firestone High School Madrigal Singers
Saturday, January 4, 2019, 5:00pm

Come gather with friends to celebrate in grand style the conclusion of Christmas Revelry. Featuring the Firestone High School Madrigal Singers, under the direction of Chad Pittman. Proceeds benefit the Food, Clothing, and Prayer Ministry of Christ Church.

Tickets: $25 in the church office or online

JOELA JONES, Pianist in Recital
with Richard Weiss, cello
Sunday, March 15, 2020, 4:00pm

Joela Jones, principal keyboardist for the Cleveland Orchestra, returns to Christ Church, where she performed the dedication concert for our beautiful Bösendorfer piano in 2014. She will be joined in performance by Richard Weiss, first assistant principal cello of the Cleveland Orchestra.

CHANCEL CHOIR IN CONCERT, with chamber orchestra
*Requiem* by John Rutter
Sunday, March 29, 2020, 4:00pm

Come experience Lent with this profound contemporary work by English composer John Rutter. Written in 1985 on the occasion of his father’s death, the Requiem combines traditional Latin texts with Psalms and other Bible verses in English.

COME TO THE CABARET!
Members of the Chancel Choir and Assorted Actors
Friday, May 15, 2020, 6:00pm

Join us in Westminster Hall for a little Spring revelry and fun! Members of the Chancel Choir and friends will perform popular songs as we share a meal and let our hair down to conclude the season.

Tickets may be purchased in the church office or online
Music Patrons
2019-2020 Christ Church Concert Series

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Memory of Dr. James A. Stanforth  
Margaret Stewart  
Steve & Byrdie Stocker  
Ralph Tamper  
Carol Krider Vaughn  
Carol Zeh
“Toccata parisienne” was written by Rulon Christiansen, a composer friend since college days, for my recital at Notre Dame Cathedral in 2015. Rulon, who is organist of Weber State University in Utah, studied organ composition and performance in Paris and has mastered the French style. It was a thrill to perform at Notre Dame, but little did anyone imagine that a few short years later there would be such serious destruction there. I consider this piece as an homage to the world’s most famous cathedral and organ.

The Toccata in F is thought to have been written around 1714, a time when Bach was largely influenced by the strongly rhythmic music of the Italians and the dance music of the French. Yet he never abandoned his North German heritage: the toccata is replete with various contrapuntal devices. Opening with a lengthy two-voiced canon, the theme is developed in a virtuoso pedal solo. The process is repeated in the dominant key, the parts being reversed, and is followed by an even more extended pedal solo. The combination of striking harmonies, audacious modulations, and the strong forward propulsion of this piece make it irresistible.

I studied the three Chorals of Franck at Stanford Memorial Church with Herbert Nanney, who was a master performer and teacher of Franck and so much other French music. He encouraged all of his students to play expressively. As I look through my Franck score, I still see his pencil notations: “Exaggerate!” “emote!” “dilate nostrils!” “heave bosom!” “snarl like a dog with a bone!”

Boëllmann’s jaunty little French dance, written originally for the piano, contrasts the oboe and flute stops of the organ. Boëllmann was a student of Gigout at the Niedermeyer School in Paris and became organist of the Church of St. Vincent-de-Paul. He composed a great number of pieces for service use, but he is best known for his Suite Gothique, Op. 25 (1895) with its famous “Prière à Notre Dame” and “Toccata.”

One of the most distinguished French organists and composers of the 20th century, Maurice Duruflé studied in Paris with Vierne, Gigout, Tournemire, and Dukas. In 1930 he was appointed organist of St. Étienne-du-Mont in Paris, which position he held until his death in 1986. Duruflé composed the Méditation around 1964, using a theme that appeared two years later as the opening melody in the Agnus Dei of his Messe “Cum jubilo.” It remained unpublished until 2001.

Vierne, the nearly blind organist of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris from 1900-1937 (he died at the keyboard playing a service there!), was the outstanding organ symphonist of the early 20th century, with six complete organ symphonies to his credit. Influenced by Franck, Widor, and Debussy, he developed his own distinct harmonic and melodic idioms. Vierne’s Symphonie No. 1 was published in 1899 and dedicated to French organ composer and virtuoso Alexandre Guilmant who premiered movements of the work in America. It was written during the time when Vierne was assistant to Widor at Saint-Sulpice and assistant to Guilmant in the organ class at the Paris Conservatoire.
The Allegro vivace is a clever scherzo with a canon in the middle section. Vierne described the Andante in his own program annotations as “a highly developed ‘Song without Words.’” And of the brilliant Final, Vierne referred to it as his “Marseillaise.” Although he was somewhat critical of the Final, which he considered a youthful work, he said that it “pleases the public... so I always play it!”

When I studied some of the symphonies of Vierne in 1979 with Alexander Schreiner at the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, he wrote in the front page of one of my scores, “Heartiest greetings to my young fellow organist James Welch, a grandson (tutorially) of mine. From Alexander Schreiner, son of Louis Vierne and grandson of César Franck, tutorially.”