

MUSICAL PRAYER

JOSEPH ADAM

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Prélude, Fugue, et Variation

César Franck
1822–1890

The principal organ works of César Franck may only be twelve in number, but they occupy a large position in the development of organ repertoire in the 19th century. One of six pieces composed between 1856 and 1862, the *Prélude, Fugue and Variation* is a masterpiece of symmetrical tripartite form. Originally conceived for harmonium and piano, it reflects Franck's complete mastery of all three keyboard instruments. In the opening Andantino cantabile a charming melody is heard on the oboe, accompanied by a background of Mendelssohn-like counterpoint. A brief Lento introduces a somber fugue, thoughtful and reflective in spite of its formal rigor. The melody of the *Prélude* returns, this time accompanied by a rippling garland and ending as quietly and simply as it began.

Melodia, op. 59, no. 11

Max Reger
1873–1916

Max Reger is generally considered as the most important German composer for organ since Bach. A tireless worker, he was certainly the most prolific. Though this music certainly can be chromatically complex, it is firmly rooted in the traditions of functional harmony as a structural basis. Composed in 1901, the twelve pieces that comprise Reger's Opus 59 were his first character pieces for the organ, and contain some of his best-known works. *Melodia* benefits in particular from the cathedral organs' rich flutes and subtle dynamics, as well as the elegant acoustics of St. James Cathedral.

Fugue in G Minor

Johann Adam Reincken
1643?–1722

Born in Deventer, Johann Adam Reincken became one of the most accomplished and admired organist in the early baroque era. As a young man, he traveled to Hamburg to study for about three years with Heinrich Scheidemann, organist of St. Catharinen. After his study in Hamburg, Reincken returned home to assume the organist's post at the Bergkerk; he was called back to Hamburg in 1659 to assist Scheidemann, and became his successor in 1659. With its repetitive, violinistic theme, the lively Fugue in G Minor is closely inspired by the florid toccatas that held an important place in an organist's repertoire of the time.

Born and educated in the German province of Thuringia, Georg Böhm began his musical career in Hamburg (where he undoubtedly became acquainted with Johann Adam Reincken) before becoming organist at the principal church of St. John's in Lüneburg in 1698, a position he held until his death. The teenage Johann Sebastian Bach, who enrolled at St. Michael's School in Lüneburg in 1700, is known to have been among Böhm's students. One of three surviving preludes specifically for organ (most of Böhm's keyboard compositions are equally at home at either the organ or harpsichord), the *Praeludium in C Major* is Böhm's best-known organ work. In the tradition of the North German *preludium*, the work is in several distinct sections, though in this particular piece, extremely truncated at times, and essentially providing a model for the prelude and fugue pairing that Böhm's student Bach later brought to perfection.

JOSEPH ADAM was first appointed Cathedral Organist at St. James Cathedral in 1993, and was named Director of Music in 2018. There he leads a program that includes three adult choirs and three youth choirs that provides music for nearly 600 services annually, as well as an extensive concert series that presents a wide range of choral and organ programs.

A dedicated educator, for twenty years he taught organ and harpsichord as a faculty member at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma. Continuing this work, he was recently named Artist in Residence in Organ at the University of Washington for the 2019-2020 academic year. As Resident Organist of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra since 2003, he performs regularly as a member of the keyboard section of the orchestra, undertaking organ, harpsichord, piano and celesta parts, as well as annual solo recitals.

His playing received international attention when he was awarded the First Prize in the St. Albans International Organ Competition in 1991, one of the most prestigious organ competitions in the world. His subsequent performances have included recitals in notable venues throughout Europe and America. During the coming year, he will be a part of a series of recitals at St. James Cathedral that will present performances of the complete organ works of Louis Vierne in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the composer's birth. His performances this season include recitals at St. Mark's Cathedral in Seattle, St. Cecilia Cathedral in Omaha, and Stanford University. He recently gave performances of the Poulenc Concerto and Respighi Suite for Organ and Strings with the North Carolina Symphony at the new Cathedral of the Holy Name of Jesus in Raleigh.

Joseph Adam was educated at The University of Iowa, the Eastman School of Music, and the University of Washington, and concertizes as a member of the Windwerk Artists cooperative.