

MUSICAL PRAYER

JOSEPH ADAM

St. James Cathedral Director of Music & Cathedral Organist

Resident Organist, Seattle Symphony

Artist in Residence in Organ, University of Washington School of Music

Three Tone Pieces, op. 22

Moderato

Allegretto

Allegro

Niels Gade

1817–1890

Niels Gade must be counted as Denmark's most important 19th-century musician. Though no child prodigy, he received his first recognition as a composer in 1849 when his overture *Echoes from Osian* won a competition sponsored by the Copenhagen Musical Union. More important for Gade was the interest it captured in Felix Mendelssohn, who performed it with his Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig. A stipend from the Danish government enabled Gade to continue his studies in Leipzig, where he became a student, friend, and later successor to Mendelssohn as conductor of the Gewandhaus Orchestra. War between Prussia and Denmark in 1848 prompted Gade's return to Copenhagen, where he remained for the rest of his life. He took a central place in Denmark's musical development in a variety of roles and professional posts, including as organist, conductor, and co-founder and director of the Copenhagen Royal Conservatory of Music. The *Three Tone Pieces* date from 1851, a period in which Gade served as organist at Copenhagen's Garnisons Church. Dedicated to his father-in-law, the important Danish musician J. P. E. Hartmann, they display a noticeable stylistic debt to Mendelssohn, reminiscent not only of Mendelssohn's organ sonatas but also the Songs without Words.

Meditation on "McKee"

Bern H. Herbolsheimer

1948–2016

Bern Herbolsheimer received recognition throughout the United States and Europe for over 500 works ranging from ballet to symphonic, operatic, chamber and choral works. His numerous major commissions and premieres included ballets for the Frankfurt Ballet, the Atlanta Ballet, the Pacific Northwest Ballet, and the Eugene Ballet. His first opera, *Aria da Capo*, won first prize in the National Opera Association's New Opera Competition. *Mark Me Twain*, his second opera, was commissioned and premiered in 1993 by the Nevada Opera for its Silver Anniversary season. "The opera is filled with attractive, dramatic, often eloquent music... it could become an American work of genuine significance." Bern's *Meditation on "McKee"* dates from the mid-1980s, when he wrote many works as an unofficial composer-in-residence at St. James Cathedral.

Neuf Pièces, op. 40

Chant de paix – Song of peace

Jean Langlais

1907–1991

The *Nine Pieces* were commissioned by the French publisher Bornemann, who asked Langlais for a set of organ pieces based on Gregorian chant and German chorales. All of the pieces were composed between 1942 and 1943. “Song of peace” has found its way into countless recital programs as a quiet piece which creates a contrast to the loud, virtuosic works of the standard organists’ repertoire. Perhaps it is the very simplicity of the tranquil mood of the piece that make it one of Langlais’s most popular works for students and seasoned recitalists alike.

Choral III in A Minor

Chant de paix – Song of peace

César Franck

1822–1890

Franck’s *Choral III* was to be his final significant work for the organ. Written in the summer of 1890, the chorals were never performed by Franck in public; the memory of a private performance at the piano with Tournemire supplying the pedal line was a memory that Tournemire cherished to his dying day. Franck had wished to write chorals for the organ as Bach (“the master of Leipzig”) had, but a very different type of choral. Whereas Bach’s are based on preëxisting congregational melodies, Franck’s works are based on choral-like melodies that he wrote himself, that provided material for a fantasy-type work. The composer remarked: “You will see, the real chorale is not the chorale itself; it is something that grows out of the piece.” More than a century later, these three works have come to represent the pinnacle of Franck’s essential contribution to the rebirth of organ composition in France.

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 named Artist in Residence in Organ at the University of Washington in 2019. As Resident Organist of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra since 2003, he has performed regularly in 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 last season included recitals at St. Mark’s Cathedral in Seattle, St. Cecilia Cathedral in Omaha, and Stanford University. He also 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.