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# Organ Rededication Series: Susan Dickerson Moeser

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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*Organ Rededication Series*

*Susan Dickerson Moeser*



*February 4, 2003, 7:30 pm  
Cannon Memorial Chapel*

... PROGRAM ...

Prelude in C major, BWV 547a

J. S. Bach  
(1685-1750)

Canonic Variations

on *Vom himmel hoch, da komm ich her*, BWV 769a

- I. Canone all'ottava
- II. Canone alla quinta
- III. Canto fermo in canone  
    alla sesto e al rovescio  
    alla terza  
    alla seconda.  
    alla nona
- IV. Canone alla settima
- V. Canon per augmentationem

Fugue in C major, BWV 547b

Annum per annum

Arvo Pärt  
(b. 1935)

Adagio-Allegro-Adagio

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

For a Mechanical Clock Organ, K. 594

(1756-1791)

Sonata IV in B-flat major

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

Allegro con brio

(1809-1847)

Andante religioso

Allegretto

Allegro maestoso e vivace



*Susan Dickerson Moeser*, University Organist and Instructor of Organ at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ performance from the University of Kansas in 1982. She has had faculty appointments at the universities of Nebraska, South Carolina, and The Pennsylvania State University teaching organ, music theory, and music history. Prior to her university appointments, she was Organist/Choirmaster at the Second Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Virginia. Having won the prestigious Fort Wayne National Organ Playing Competition in 1983, she is a well-known recitalist, and has concertized throughout the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Portugal, and South Korea. Her recent CD, titled "Susan Moeser plays Bedient Opus 59," features the concert she performed at the 1999 Regional American Guild of Organists convention in Omaha, Nebraska. Active nationally in the American Guild of Organists, she is past Director of the AGO Regional Competitions for Young Organists and past AGO National Councillor.

Prelude and Fugue in C major

J. S. Bach

The "Nine-Eight," so called because of the meter of the prelude, was one of only four independent preludes and fugues written during Bach's final compositional period at Leipzig. The entire prelude is comprised of only four motives which appear in the first four measures of the work. These four measures are in strict two-voice canon with the left hand following one measure behind the right. The pedal enters in measure five with an ostinato theme drawn from the second motive. The remainder of the composition is drawn from this material, creating a work of great power and unity. The fugue is even more unified, based almost exclusively upon the material of the subject, which is presented more than fifty times. Great tension is created by the fact that the pedal is withheld until measure forty-nine when it enters with the subject in augmentation (longer note values than the original statement of the subject).

The juxtaposition of this prelude and fugue with the *Canonic Variations*, both in C major, is not without purpose. Thematic material of the prelude and fugue is found in at least two of the variations. In addition, the accumulation of fugal techniques at the conclusion of the middle variation is closely akin to the contrapuntal intensity at the end of the fugue.

Vom himmel hoch, da komm ich her

Bach

In June of 1747 Bach entered the Mizler Society for the Musical Sciences and presented to them the *Canonic Variations*. These five variations are, in fact, entirely worthy of being placed beside two other works of Bach's old age: the *Musical Offering* (1747) and the *Art of Fugue* (1749-1750). The abstract and philosophical nature of this work is especially prominent in the original engraving for the Society in which three of the canons were not even written out in full. Only the first notes of the imitating voice were given, thus making it impossible to play from the score at all.

In the last years of his life, Bach revised and reordered the variations so that the last variation now came in the middle. This is the order of today's performance. A brief description of each variation follows:

- Canon at the octave between two upper voices, cantus firmus in pedal as tenor.
- Canon (derived from melody) at the 5<sup>th</sup> below between soprano and alto, cantus firmus in pedal.
- Various inverted canons of the cantus firmus at the 6<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>. A crowning imitative piece, incorporating traditional devices of diminution and stretto, and ending with pedal point and B-A-C-H reference.
- Canon at the 7<sup>th</sup> between bass and tenor, free part in alto, and cantus firmus in the soprano.
- Canon at the octave between soprano and bass, the latter in augmentation, free part in alto, and cantus firmus in the pedal as tenor. B-A-C-H signature at the end.

Annum per annum

Arvo Pärt

“Annum per annum” was commissioned in 1980 for the 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cathedral in Speyer. The piece consists of five variations on a sequentially changing cantus firmus, flanked by an introduction and a coda. The 5 variations are titled K, G, C, S, and A, representing the 5 sections of the ordinary of the mass—Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei—which “annum per annum” and day after day has been celebrated for nine centuries in the Cathedral at Speyer. As requested by the composer near the end of the introduction, the organ will be turned off. One can hear the dying sounds of the instrument as the wind leaves the pipes.

Adagio-Allegro-Adagio

For a Mechanical Clock Organ

W. A. Mozart

Mozart made no bones about it; this piece was written solely for the money during a period in his life when he was destitute. Furthermore, he despised the mechanical organ for which it was written—essentially a clock that actually housed a small set of flute pipes, activated by a device not unlike our modern day music boxes. The good news in all of this? The piece is a remarkably delightful gem in the literature.

## THE VON BECKERATH ORGAN

The story of University of Richmond's von Beckerath organ starts in 1958 when the music faculty began investigating what kind of organ would be best in Cannon Memorial Chapel. The contract with Rudolf von Beckerath was signed in 1959 and the rest is history.

It was a bold step then to order an organ with mechanical action, exposed pipes, no piston or expression pedals. . . and built by a German unknown to most people in this country. Only one of his instruments was in America—at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cleveland.

Negotiations were helped when Stetson College and University of Richmond learned that both were negotiating for similar instruments from von Beckerath. This, coupled with the fact that the \$30,000 price tag for our instrument was considerably less than a comparable American organ, made dealing with a "foreigner" more palatable.

September 1961 the organ arrived on campus—in 36 crates weighing more than ten tons. Shortly after Christmas the instrument was completed and properly welcomed with a champagne party.

Little did we know how lucky we were that George Taylor, then a high school student in Amelia, Virginia, already had a burning interest in organ building. He was frequently in Cannon Chapel during the installation, and from the fall of 1964 to spring of 1968, he served an apprenticeship with Rudolf von Beckerath. He has long had his own factory, Taylor and Boody, in Santon, Virginia. For University of Richmond, it was especially fortuitous—George has known this organ from its beginnings, loves it, and has given it the tender loving care we wanted for it and that it deserves.

A complete restoration took place last summer, and of course George and his workers were the ones to do it.

It is now like new and stands, as it did in 1961, as a truly distinguished instrument. It will long remain a monument to good planning, skillful craftsmanship, and high standards of musical taste!

—Suzanne Bunting, Professor Emerita

# 2002-2003 Concert Series

**Mike Davison, *trumpet***

**Joanne Kong, *piano***

**Sunday, February 9, 2003, 3:00 pm**

**Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music**

Mike Davison will perform virtuosic solos for the cornet, trumpet and flugel horn. Accompanied by Joanne Kong on piano, the recital will feature a concerto by Hummel and an American Music segment by Gershwin, Bernstein and Beiderbecke. (Free and open to the public.)

**Jerry Gonzalez and the Fort Apache Band**

**Monday, February 10, 2003, 7:30 pm**

**Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music**

Jerry Gonzalez has taken a global view of jazz in creating his unique brand of improvised music. In 1980 Gonzalez formed the influential Fort Apache Band, which is dedicated to playing uncompromised Afro-Caribbean jazz. (289-8980 for ticket information.)

**Neal Campbell, *organ***

**Sunday, February 16, 2002, 2:00 pm**

**Cannon Memorial Chapel**

Organist and Choirmaster of St. Stephen's Church and adjunct faculty member Neal Campbell performs a concert of music by Bruhns, Beethoven, Mozart, Sweelinck, Near, and Bach. (Free and open to the public.)

**Shanghai Quartet**

**With Sanford Sylvan, *baritone***

**Monday, February 17, 2003, 7:30 pm**

**Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music**

Since an immensely successful New York debut at Town Hall in 1987, the press and public alike have hailed the Shanghai Quartet as a leading ensemble of our time. American baritone Sanford Sylvan is noted for his radiantly pure, lyric tone, the clarity of his diction and respect and understanding for words and music. (289-8980 for ticket information.)

**Sanford Sylvan, *baritone***

**With David Breitman, *piano***

**Wednesday, February 19, 2003, 7:30 pm**

**Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music**

From Schubert and Bach to contemporary opera and song, the American baritone Sanford Sylvan displays a remarkable range of vocal expression and communicative power. Deeply committed to the art of the vocal recital, Sylvan and his long-time collaborator, pianist David Breitman, have performed extensively throughout the U.S. and Europe. (289-8980 for ticket information.)