

Recital
introducing

David V. Hufford, Organist



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First Presbyterian Church
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PROGRAM

Grand Triumphal Chorus in A Major, Op. 47, No. 2

Alexandre Guilmant
(1837-1911)

Allegro, Trio Sonata No. 5 in C, BWV 529

J. S. Bach
(1685-1750)

“Shimmy” from *Flights of Fancy, Ballet for Organ*

William Albright
(1944-1998)

Prelude on “Malabar”

Leo Sowerby
(1895-1968)

From *Partita on the Hymn Tune “Austria”*

Thomas M. Kuras
(1950-1997)

V. Arioso
VI. Fugue

MEET DAVID

Born in Toledo, David began his musical journey at age six and secured his first church organist position at 16. Accepted into the University of Michigan Organ Department, David moved to Ann Arbor in 1991. He won the 1993 Keyboard Day Organ Scholarship Competition and placed second in a National Hymn-Playing Competition in 1995. He also was a featured recitalist at the Organ Historical Society National Convention in Detroit. While completing his Master’s Degree, he received another organ scholarship and sang in the University Choir. David has been Director of Music/Organist at Angelica Lutheran Church in Allen Park the past 25 years. During his time there, he led an ambitious project to significantly rebuild and enlarge the church’s 1952 Casavant pipe organ according to a new specification of his own design. The results have been widely admired by both the congregation and visiting musicians. In 1993, David helped establish the Renaissance Pipe Organ Company in Ann Arbor, which is well known for its quality of work and has an impressive clientele that includes many prominent Detroit cathedrals and churches.



PROGRAM NOTES

Grand Triumphant Chorus in A Major, Op. 47, No. 2 - Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)

Alexandre Guilmant was a French organist and composer who held an important place in the tradition and succession of the French masters. Of local interest, Guilmant was one of the organists who performed amid the musically-vast 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, for which a monumental new pipe organ featuring electric action had been built by the Detroit firm of Farrand and Votey. Following the Exposition, the organ was installed in University Hall at the University of Michigan before being relocated again in 1913, with additions, to the then-new Hill Auditorium. The instrument since has been substantially rebuilt, and retains fewer than 900 of the Farrand and Votey organ's original 3,901 pipes among its present total of nearly 7,600.

David first studied this composition (at age 21) in early 1990 under the guidance of Matthew Samelak, a classmate of Dave VanderMeer's from Westminster Choir College, and performed it in an AGO members' recital in Toledo.

In this performance, it may be noted that console assistant Randall Nicholls engages short bursts of notes on the Tuba stop in the final section of the piece. These augmentations are specially noted in the score, and are intended to be brought in by means of a non-latching Solo to Great coupler lever on a mechanical-action organ.

Allegro, Trio Sonata No. 5 in C, BWV 529 - J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

J. S. Bach composed his collection of six Trio Sonatas for organ in the late 1720s for his eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, to help prepare him to become another great organist. Most of the Bach organ Sonatas generally consist of three movements arranged as fast-slow-fast, featuring invertible counterpoint. Several of the sonata movements were reworkings of earlier Bach compositions, while others were written as new for the collection.

One might think of these sonatas as music that easily could be playable by two flutes or violins plus a cello for the bass part. With very rare exception, there are never more than three notes being played at once (one in each voice). These compositions are considered to be among the most difficult Bach organ works because playing them essentially requires the organist to play the literal equivalent of three different instruments at once—one with each hand, respectively, and one with the feet. While technically quite challenging, the Trio Sonatas are of exceptional grace, charm, and beauty. Their construction and the counterpoint found within demonstrate the mature genius and skill of Johann Sebastian Bach.

The movement heard here is arranged in A-B-A form. It is also interesting to note the contrast between the arpeggiated motives in the A sections and the scalar passages in the B section. Key areas shift frequently, adding much interest to the music, while the Pedal part serves throughout as continuo to the two manual voices.

David played a transcribed and transposed arrangement of the first movement of Trio Sonata No. 6 (BWV 530) in collaboration with virtuoso guest flautist Brandon LePage as the Prelude for FPC's recorded Worship service on August 30, 2020.

"Shimmy" from *Flights of Fancy, Ballet for Organ* (1991-92) - William Albright (1944-1998)

William Albright was an American composer well-known in this area as Professor of Composition at the University of Michigan. Albright was fond of many genres of music, including various types of jazz and ragtime. His multi-movement composition, *Flights of Fancy: Ballet for Organ*, explores many styles and colors. It was premiered by organist Hector Olivera at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta in 1992. The movement heard here, "Shimmy," is a fun and rhythmic piece whose tempo marking reads, "With exceptional bounce." Surely it would work well on a Hammond organ! David Hufford played the Ann Arbor organ

premiere of the entire work at Hill Auditorium in 1998, although an arrangement for band previously had been performed. Sadly, Albright passed away shortly before David's recital, which he had planned to attend.

Prelude on "Malabar" - Leo Sowerby (1895-1968)

In the late 1940s, British-born organist and composer David McK(inley) Williams (1887-1978) compiled a collection, *The Modern Anthology*, consisting of contemporary pieces composed by his friends and colleagues. Upon David McK Williams' request of Leo Sowerby to write a piece for his new collection, Sowerby honored his friend by composing this ravishing piece based on the hymn tune "Malabar"—which had been composed by David McK Williams in 1941. Much of the musical material throughout the composition is cleverly derived from the first eight notes of the melody in inversion, i.e. as though the musical notes were viewed or played upside-down in a mirror. Following two statements of the short, two-phrase melody on solo stops, a monumental crescendo leads to a grand final statement played on most of the organ's resources before rapidly fading to a final reflection of the final seven notes of the melody on the softest stops. The harmonies throughout are complex and modern, and the music features Sowerby characteristics such as use of the Clarinet stop in its lowest register.

The text of the hymn commonly associated with the tune "Malabar" is an early-20th century metrical versification of a prayer found in the [Communion] Liturgy of Malabar, dating back at least as far as 1599:

- 1 Strengthen for service, Lord, the hands
that holy things have taken;
let ears that now have heard thy songs
to clamour never waken.
- 2 Lord, may the tongues which 'Holy' sang
keep free from all deceiving;
the eyes which saw thy love be bright,
thy blessèd hope perceiving.
- 3 The feet that tread thy holy courts
from light do thou not banish;
the bodies by thy Body fed
with thy new life replenish.

From *Partita on the Hymn Tune "Austria"* (1977) - Thomas Kuras (1950-1997)

V. Arioso

VI. Fugue

Thomas Kuras was a Detroit-area organist, composer, conductor, and musical scholar who served area Catholic churches, most notably St. Joseph Catholic Church (1973-1997). Kuras's life tragically was cut short by cancer that originated in a malformed lung, ending the nonetheless-prolific musical output of a true and too-little-known genius. In 1977, Kuras was commissioned by the Detroit Chapter of the American Guild of Organists to compose this *Partita on the Hymn Tune Austria*, which was premiered by organist Huw Lewis.

From the Partita, the penultimate movement entitled, "Arioso," patterned after the music of Gerald Finzi, always has been a favorite. The ritornello accompaniment features some unusual writing with detached, quarter-note rhythms as well as other material appearing in varying note values each time. (David Hufford was asked to serve as organist for Mr. Kuras's funeral Mass in 1997, and first played the Arioso at that time.) The Fugue, which concludes the Partita, takes its principal motive from the third phrase of the tune, "Austria." The final measures of the Fugue bring back material from the Partita's opening movement (not heard here), entitled Chorale. The coda features the hymn tune in a chorale-esque style (after J. S. Bach's writing in his *Orgelbüchlein*) over "ladders" of zig-zagging notes in the Pedal. It concludes in a dense and epic texture reminiscent of the writing of Max Reger.