

Pacific Lutheran University  
School of Arts and Communication / Department of Music presents

Richard D. Moe Organ Series

## **Curt Sather, organist**

Sunday, April 9, 2017, at 3pm  
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall.

Please disable the audible signal on all watches, pagers and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.  
Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

### **PROGRAM**

- Sonata III in A Major, Op. 65 (1845).....Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)**  
Con moto maestoso  
Andante tranquillo
- Contrapunctus VIII from The Art of the Fugue, BWV 1080.....Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**
- Clavierübung III (1739).....J.S. Bach**  
Duetto I in E Minor, BWV 802  
Duetto II in F Major, BWV 803  
Duetto III in G Major, BWV 804  
Duetto IV in A Minor, BWV 805
- Prelude and Fugue in B Minor, BWV 544.....J.S. Bach**
- Choral No. 1 in E Major (1890) ..... César Franck (1822-1890)**
- Hommage à Frescobaldi, Op. 70 (1951) .....Jean Langlais (1907-1991)**  
VII. Theme and Variations
- The Stations of the Cross, Op. 29 (1931)..... Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)**  
VIII. Jesus Comforts the Women of Jerusalem
- Symphonie VII in A Minor, Op. 42, No. 3 (1885) .....Charles Marie Widor (1844-1937)**  
I. Moderato

## Program Notes

**Felix Mendelssohn**'s great love for the music of Johann Sebastian Bach is evidenced in his legendary revival of the St. Matthew Passion in 1829, and the full organ recital that he performed in Bach's own St. Thomas Church in Leipzig in 1840 to raise funds for a Bach monument, which still stands today. Just a few years later Mendelssohn published a set of six organ sonatas. Sonata III begins with a grand procession, entirely appropriate for celebrating Palm Sunday today, which is followed by a contrasting fugue in the spirit of Bach. The theme moves from voice to voice, while the trumpet in the pedal declares the German Lutheran hymn tune "Out of the Depths I Cry to You". The piece builds and a pedal solo brings us back to the opening processional music. The brief second movement is a sweet, soft contrast to the grandeur and furor of the first movement.

**Johann Sebastian Bach** worked on *The Art of the Fugue* during his last decade, and in his final years was preparing it for publication, which only happened after his death. This is a collection of fugues and canons all based on one theme in d minor, employing every possible contrapuntal compositional device. *Contrapunctus VIII* is for three voices, and is a triple fugue having three separate themes which are transformed and combined in various and surprising ways.

Bach published his third collection of keyboard music, *Clavierübung III*, in 1739, specifically for the organ having two manuals (keyboards) and pedal. The collection is filled with number symbolism representing the Trinity: there are 27 pieces in the collection (3 x 3 x 3); the pieces require three keyboards; etc. Among the many curiosities are the four Duetti which follow a series of 21 chorales preludes based on hymns for the Lutheran Mass and Catechism. Because these two-voice pieces do not utilize the organ pedals, nor have any obvious religious or liturgical titles, it was long thought that they were intended for harpsichord, and were, perhaps, added as an afterthought. The Duetti, however, are perfectly suited for colors of the organ. As a group of four they may represent the four Gospels, or the four seasons, or the four elements. Being called duets, perhaps they are simply a divine conversation. Using the compositional technique of imitation (fugue, canon, etc.), perhaps they continue the idea in Luther's Catechism which pervades the *Clavierübung III*, representing the student following the teacher. In any case, their key signatures rise stepwise: E, F, G, A, leading directly to the next piece.

The Prelude and Fugue in B minor remains one of Bach's mature masterpieces for the instrument, most likely composed during his years at Leipzig (1723-1750). We are fortunate to have an autograph manuscript of this massive piece, showing Bach's beautiful, expressive handwriting. The key of b minor is often associated with the tension and passion and glory of Holy Week.

**César Franck**'s Three Chorals were composed during his last months of life. Choral No. 1, in E major, was dedicated to another Parisian organist, Eugène Gigout. Its form is based on several themes which Franck uses in a set of variations, and masterfully combines the themes and allows them to undergo character transformations, modulating throughout many keys, until finally the main hymn-like theme proclaims its victory on full organ. Franck suggested this piece was "not to comfort the believer, but to inspire a possible convert." The sounds that Franck intended for his compositions were that of his organ at St. Clotilde in Paris, built by Cavaille-Coll in 1859.

**Jean Langlais** also served the church of St. Clotilde from 1945-1988, following Franck's successor Charles Tournemire. His suite of pieces titled "Hommage à Frescobaldi" contains a Theme and Variations. After the simple, jaunty theme is presented, there follows three variations, showing off various colors of the organ. A brief coda brings the piece to a close.

**Marcel Dupré** first presented The Stations of the Cross as improvisations based on poetry of Paul Claudel (1868-1955), but later published the fourteen movements. The eighth station is based upon the following text:

Before he climbs the mountain a last time, Jesus raises his finger and turns toward the people who accompany him, some poor, tearful women with their children in their arms. And us, let us not only look, let us listen to Jesus, because he is there. It is not a man who raises his finger in the middle of this poor illumination, it is God, who for our salvation, has not suffered only in a painting. Thus, this man was God All-Powerful, he is then real! It is indeed a day where God suffered from there for us! What is the price of this danger that was atoned for us? Is the salvation of man an affair so simple that the Son, to accomplish it, is obliged to tear himself from the breast of the Father? If he goes thus to Paradise, what is Hell then? What do we do with dead wood, if we do such a thing with living wood?

**Charles Marie Widor** was organist of St. Sulpice in Paris. Widor's long life is matched by his long tenure at the church (1870-1933, when Dupré took over). A prolific composer in all genres, Widor is remembered today for his ten large organ Symphonies. The Symphonie VII is a massive work consisting of six movements in which Widor uses the organ as a huge orchestra, employing all its resources. The magnificent opening movement, with its angular themes, shows both the composer and the instrument at their best.

### **About the Artist**

**Curt Sather** received music degrees in organ performance from Arizona State University and the Eastman School of Music, studying organ with Robert Clark, Catharine Crozier Gleason, and Russell Saunders. In addition to serving as a church musician since age 12, he has performed widely in the US, Europe, Australia & New Zealand. He is currently Organist & Choirmaster at St. John's Episcopal Church, Olympia, where he recently performed the complete organ works of J. S. Bach on a 24-hour marathon recital. He is a board member of the Tacoma Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, teaches privately, and performs frequently on organ, harpsichord and piano. Traveling, opera, and studying Arabic, fill any spare moments.

## Disposition of the Gottfried and Mary Fuchs Organ

Lagerquist Concert Hall,  
Mary Baker Russell Music Building  
Pacific Lutheran University  
Tacoma WA

**Built by Paul Fritts & Co. 1998**

Great		Positive		Swell	
Praestant (Gis)	16'	Praestant (F)	8'	Quintadena	16'
Octave	8'	Gedackt	8'	Principal	8'
Rohrflöte	8'	Octave	4'	Bourdon	8'
Spielflöte	8'	Rohrflöte	4'	Viole de Gambe	8'
Salicional	8'	Octave	2'	Voix Celeste (c'')	8'
Octave	4'	Waldflöte	2'	Octave	4'
Spitzflöte	4'	Nasat	1 1/3'	Koppelflöte	4'
Quinte	2 2/3	Sesquialter	II	Nasard	2 2/3
Octave	2'	Scharff	IV-VII	Gemshorn	2'
Cornet	V	Fagott	16'	Tierce	1 3/5'
Mixture	V-VII	Trompete	8'	Mixture	V-VII
Trompete	16'	Dulcian	8'	Trompete	8'
Trompete	8'			Hautbois	8'
Baarpfeife	8'			Voix Humaine	8'
				Schalmey	4'
		<b>Pedal</b>			
Subbaß	32'	Praestant	16'	Posaune	32'
Subbaß	16'	Octave	8'	Posaune	16'
Gedackt	8'	Octave	4'	Trompete	8'
Nachthorn	2'	Mixture	V-VII	Trompete	4'
				Cornett	2'

**Couplers:** Positive/Great  
Swell/Great  
Swell/Positive  
Great/Pedal  
Positive/Pedal  
Swell/Pedal

**Key Action:** Direct Mechanical, suspended

**Manual compass:** 58 notes (C-a''')

**Pedal compass:** 30 notes (C-f')

**Temperament:** Kellner

**Other:** Tremulants  
Wind Stabilizer

For pictures of the organ, please visit the organ builder's website at [www.frittsorgan.com](http://www.frittsorgan.com).

For more information about the organ, the organ program at PLU, and the Richard D. Moe Organ Series, please visit [www.plu.edu/organ](http://www.plu.edu/organ).

## About the Organ Builder

Since the founding of the company in 1979, Paul Fritts & Co. Organ Builders has built forty one instruments. The firm has devoted considerable time researching and practicing the techniques developed by the finest organ builders working in the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Mexico, France and the United States with an emphasis on the so-called Golden Age period of organ building. Organ building during this period reached a very high level and sophistication, particularly when we study pipe making. Elegant speech combined with a full yet sweet and colorful tone captivates the listener. The research includes careful observations of the acoustical properties of the rooms in which they speak; a key aspect to consider as one evaluates the sound of an organ. These experiences, together with the collective expertise found within the workshop, contribute to each new project. The primary mission is to craft instruments that today's players and audiences will love and cherish.

Recent work has reflected a desire to expand further the range of the instruments while maintaining high musical standards within a meaningful and useful style. For the most part, this involves building larger, more expansive projects with additional features that broaden the musical scope of the organs. The last project was a seventy stop organ, which is in the Basilica on the campus of The University of Notre Dame, Indiana. This is the firm's largest instrument to date with four manuals and a highly decorated case that includes a Rückpositive case cantilevered from the gallery rail similar to the organ here at PLU.

There are currently seven craftsmen working with Paul in the workshop. All design work along with the construction of the thousands of components (except for the electric blowers, electronic pre-set systems and small hardware items) is done in-house. The establishment of the pipe shop in 1983 completed this vision for the company, enabling personalized attention to the most important parts of the organs. The workshop itself, located just ten blocks from PLU, features a beautiful timber-framed structure with sufficient height and space for the largest organs to be assembled. This contributes greatly to professional and efficient installations.

### 2016-1017 Richard D. Moe Organ Series

Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Russell Music Building  
Pacific Lutheran University

Nathan Laube, Sunday, September 11, 2016, 3pm  
Jonathan Ryan, Sunday, October 9, 2016, 3pm  
Kathrine handford, Sunday, November 6, 2016, 3pm  
Jonathan Wohlers, Sunday, March 5, 2017, 3pm  
Curt Sather, Sunday, April 9, 2017, 3pm

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