

PROGRAM NOTES

Many organ concerts this year will include works by Felix Mendelssohn to honor the 200th anniversary of his birth. Mendelssohn was almost alone among major composers of the early 19th century in giving serious attention to the organ, both as a performer and as a composer. His six sonatas, three preludes and fugues, and other miscellaneous pieces have become staples of the repertoire, and his performances of works by Bach, as organist and as conductor, led to a revival of interest in playing the music of the great master. The first movement of Sonata III includes the melody of a chorale, "Out of the depths I cry to Thee," stated in the pedals through the central section of the piece.

The organ sonatas of C. P. E. Bach have been somewhat unjustifiably neglected by modern performers, perhaps because they are misunderstood, or perhaps because they make no use of the pedals. Bach wrote five sonatas for Princess Amalie of Prussia, the younger sister of Frederick the Great, who was reportedly a talented organist but unable to play the pedals. They are pieces of real substance from an era when other major composers largely ignored the organ.

Gerald Near has been a leading American composer of choral and organ music for more than three decades. His Passacaglia was written while he was still a student, but already shows a mastery of harmony and counterpoint. There are 18 statements of (or variations on) the eight-measure theme, which appears not only in the bass (traditional for passacaglias), but also frequently in one of the upper voices. The counter-melody that is announced in the first variation also plays an important role as the piece develops. In the final variation the theme is heard in inversion. The colorful registration is indicated by the composer.

The Partita by Swiss composer and organist Lionel Rogg, who composes in a variety of styles, lies squarely in the neo-baroque camp. The chorale partita itself (a set of variations) was an important concept in the baroque, and within the Partita Rogg makes use of several common baroque forms or procedures: the bicinium (a two-voice piece in which the voices are restated in inversion), the canon, the passacaglia, and the toccata. In addition, Rogg writes that the work was inspired by the best examples of the neo-baroque organ. He says, "Whatever the future of organ building and organ playing, the organs of the 'neo-baroque'... keep a part of their allure thanks to the music that these instruments have inspired." Much of the harmonic and melodic writing in this work is based on the first four notes of the chorale melody, which outline a chord built in fourths.

- notes by John Brock

UNIVERSITY OF
LOUISVILLE[®]
SCHOOL OF MUSIC 

presents

John Brock,
organ

Guest Artist Recital

*Sponsored by the Louisville Chapter of
the American Guild of Organists*



Friday Evening
November 20, 2009
8:00 p.m.

Margaret Comstock Concert Hall

WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE!
WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE CONCERT THIS EVENING.

*Smoking is not permitted in the School of Music building.
In the unlikely event of fire or other emergency, please walk to the nearest exit.
The use of recording devices and flash photography is strictly prohibited.*
PLEASE SILENCE CELL PHONES, ELECTRONIC WATCHES AND PAGERS.
Thank you.

BIOGRAPHY

John Brock is Professor Emeritus of Music at the University of Tennessee, where he continues to teach organ. In a career spanning over 40 years he has pursued many interests involving the organ, including teaching, performance, research, writing, recording, and organ consulting. He is the author of *Introduction to Organ Playing in 17th and 18th Century Style* (Wayne Leupold Editions) and has recorded a wide range of repertoire, including the complete organ works of Hugo Distler, on several compact discs.

In 2007 Prof. Brock was honored by the Knoxville AGO Chapter with the creation of the Brock Organ Education Fund in recognition of his many years as chair of the chapter's annual Church Music Workshop.

Prof. Brock also serves as Music Associate at Knoxville's Church of the Ascension, a position he has held since 2002, and Adjunct Instructor of Organ at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, TN. He is an active member of the American Guild of Organists, the Organ Historical Society, and the Southeastern Historical Keyboard society.

PROGRAM

Sonata in A Major, Op. 65, No. 3
Allegro maestoso
Andante tranquillo

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Nun danket alle Gott, BWV 657
(Now Thank We All Our God)
Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor, BWV 542

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Sonata in D Major, Wq70/5
Allegro di molto
Adagio e mesto
Allegro

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach
(1714-1788)

Passacaglia (1965)

Gerald Near
(b. 1942)

Partita on "Nun freut Euch" (1976)
(Rejoice, Beloved Christians)

Lionel Rogg
(b. 1936)

Choral
Bicinium
Canon
Presto
Recit
Passacaglia
Toccata