

Department of Organ, Sacred Music, and Historical Keyboards

from the studio of Edoardo Bellotti

**Käthe Wright Kaufman, organ**

Program

from *Trois Impressions*, op. 72 Sigfrid Karg-Elert Harmonies du Soir (1877-1933)

from *Choral-Improvisationen für Orgel*, op. 65

No. 21 O Welt, ich muss dich lassen

Suite du Premier Ton Louis-Nicolas Clérambault

i. Grand Plein Jeu (1676-1749)

ii. Fugue

iii. Duo

iv. Trio

v. Basse et Dessus de Trompette

vii. Dialogues sur les Grand Jeux

Partita “Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele” (12 variations) Georg Böhm

(1661-1733)

Prelude and Fugue in C minor, BWV 546 J. S. Bach

(1685-1750)

April 14, 2015, 7:00pm

Christ Church, Rochester, N.Y.

*This jury recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Bachelor of Music.*

Program Notes

**Sigfrid Karg-Elert** was an accomplished pianist and also taught at conservatory, but his primary passion was composition. He wrote over 250 works for organ, 100 works for harmonium, and several other chamber works. However, Karg-Elert identified as an outcast composer, and his German colleagues criticized him for writing in a style that was too cosmopolitan and not nationalistic enough. “Harmonies du Soir” is the first in a collection of three pieces published in 1909. It may take its cues from a piece of the same name, in the same key, by Franz Liszt, written in 1851. Other influences on Karg-Elert’s impressionistic style include Claude Debussy and Alexander Scriabin.

Karg-Elert followed the example of J. S. Bach's Orgelbuchlein when he wrote his Op. 65, Choral-Improvisationen für Orgel, published in 1909. He set 66 traditional chorale tunes in six volumes, according to the Church year. From Vol. 2, Passiontide, comes No. 21, "O Welt, ich muss dich lassen," or “Oh world, I must leave you.” In this composition, Karg-Elert sets the tune in the style of a canzone, or a simple, songlike setting of text. The text associated with the chorale is as follows:

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| 1. O World, I must leave you,  I travel from here along my way  to the everlasting fatherland.  I will give up my spirit  so that my body and life  lie in God’s merciful hand | 2. My time is now completed,  death ends my life,  to die is to my advantage,  there is no staying on earth,  I must gain eternity,  with peace and joy I travel hence. | 3. My trust is placed in God,  I will behold his face,  truly through Jesus Christ  who has died for me,  gained the fathers grace  and so has become my mediator |

**Louis-Nicolas Clérambault** came from a musical family (his father and two of his sons were also musicians). While very young, he learned to play the violin and harpsichord and he studied the organ with André Raison. Clérambault also studied composition and voice with Jean-Baptiste Moreau. Clérambault became the organist at the church of the Grands-Augustins and entered the service of Madame de Maintenon, who presented concerts for Louis XIV. After the death of Louis XIV and Guillaume-Gabriel Nivers, he succeeded the latter at the organ of the church of Saint-Sulpice and the royal house of Saint-Cyr, an institution for young girls from the poor nobility. The Suite du Premier Ton comes from Clérambault’s *Livre d’Orgue*, published in 1710 and dedicated to “Monsieur Raison Organiste de l’Abbaye Royale de Sainte Geneviève du Mont.” In *Livre* d’Orgue there is also a Suite de Deuxième Ton, indicating that Clérambault might have planned a cycle of pieces in all of the church modes, eventually.

**Georg** **Böhm** was born in Hohenkirchen in 1661 and studied in Goldbach and Gotha. In 1693 he lived in Hamburg, where he might have had occasion to hear organists such as Vincent Lübeck, Johann Adam Reincken, and possibly Dieterich Buxtehude, in nearby Lübeck. Böhm became organist at the Johanniskirche in Lüneburg in 1698. Two years later, a young J. S. Bach received a scholarship to sing soprano in the choir of the Michaeliskirche in that same city. Many years later, Bach's son Carl Philipp Emanuel wrote in a letter to Johann Nikolaus Forkel that his father "loved and studied the works of the Lüneberg organist Georg Böhm," and it is likely that Böhm's compositions influenced Bach's own chorale settings. In his Partita "Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele,” Georg Böhm uses the "Chorale Partita" form, which combines the Italian partita (a variation form using a dance song as its basis) with the Lutheran church chorale, creating a multi-movement piece with variations on a church melody. In this case, the melody of the chorale is a Lutheran adaptation of Psalm 42 from the Genevan Psalter (1551), by Louis Bourgeois. Böhm created several chorale partitas, most likely intended for home use on a pedal clavier.

It is not clear if **J. S. Bach**’s Prelude and Fugue in C minor belong together. Based on his study of various manuscript copies, scholar Peter Williams posits that the Fugue was written earlier, while the Prelude was written during Bach’s time in Leipzig. The Prelude is an example of rhetorical form, with the first section (the *Propositio*) containing the main theme; followed by the *Confutatio* and *Confirmatio*, in which the triplet figures spin out and the original material is restated in extracts; and ending with the *Peroratio*, or conclusion and restatement of the first theme. In the Fugue, the subject is introduced in ascending order, starting with the manuals in the bass. As the three other voices enter, followed by the pedals, the texture grows in complexity and breadth. The Fugue contains some attributes (including an almost random, out-of-style episode at m.121) that have led some to wonder if the piece might have been written or finished by another composer.

*Thank you to all who helped me prepare for this performance, especially Professor Bellotti and my registrants, Brian Glikes and Bryan Holten!*