

GRADUATE ORGAN RECITAL

By

JONATHAN CASADY

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A PERFORMANCE IN LIEU OF THESIS PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MUSIC

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

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Summary of Performance Option in Lieu of Thesis
Presented to the Graduate School of the University of Florida
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Music

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May 2012

Chair: Laura Ellis

Major: Music

This organ recital includes music of England, Germany, and France, and showcases compositions of the Baroque, Romantic, and Contemporary eras. The middle two pieces in this program were selected because they employ the passacaglia form, a piece written in triple meter that features a *basso ostinato*. The first passacaglia based composition is Bach's Passacaglia in c minor and the second is Franck's Chorale in b minor, which was the first significant composition based on a passacaglia since Bach's. Franck also led a new French tradition called the symphonic organ tradition. The concluding piece was chosen because it demonstrates the zenith of the French Romantic symphonic style started by Franck. In preparation for this recital, performance practice and scholarly research were examined, both of which heavily influenced the interpretation of the repertoire learned for this performance. This graduated recital was performed at Three o'clock in the afternoon, Saturday, March 17, 2012, on the Andrew Anderson Memorial Organ in the University Auditorium on the University of Florida campus.

Jonathan Casady, organ
Graduate Recital
Saturday, March 17, 2012
3:00 pm

Alleluyas	Simon Preston (b. 1938)
Passacaglia and Fugue in c, BWV 582	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Chorale No. 2 in b	César Franck (1822–1890)
Sixième Symphonie pour grand orgue, Op. 59 V. Final	Louis Vierne (1870–1937)

- Program Notes -

English organist, conductor, and composer Simon Preston wrote *Alleluyas* in the style of French composer Olivier Messiaen. The work, which features several solo reed stops, including the *trompette-en-chamade* at the end of the piece, is prefaced with a text from the *Liturgy of St.*

James:

At his feet the six-winged Seraph;
Cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the Presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry,
Alleluya, alleluya, alleluya, Lord most high.

Preston was a pupil of C.H. Trevor and Sir David Willcocks and has held many prestigious positions, including Organ Scholar at King's College, Cambridge and Organist and Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey.

Johann Sebastian Bach perfected the passacaglia form. The passacaglia is based on a sacred tune by French organist Andre Raison (1650–1719). Bach expanded the four-measure

theme into eight measures. The composition begins with the ostinato stated unaccompanied in the pedal, upon which Bach presents twenty variations featuring the following rhythms: quarter note, eighth note, sixteenth note, triplet, and pedal point. The passacaglia elides into the fugue, which features the passacaglia theme as its subject. This fugue is fascinating as it contains two countersubjects. Incredibly, at every entry of the subject, the subject and two countersubjects all sound together simultaneously. Ascending sequential material sparks the final entrance of the subject leading to a dramatic landing on a Neapolitan sixth chord, before ending the piece with supreme sonic exhilaration.

Franck put the final touches on his *Trois Chorales* while on his deathbed. Two other composers, Bach and Brahms, also wrote organ chorales as their final compositions. However, it is important to note that Franck's chorales were not based on sacred *canti firmi* but on original material. The b minor chorale is a free passacaglia and the first substantial passacaglia-based organ piece since Bach's. Franck opens the chorale with a statement of the somber theme in the pedal, which is paired with tolling figures played by the hands. Quarter, eighth, triplet, and sixteenth note variations follow, leading into the beautiful chorale written in the parallel major. The second half of the piece begins with a brief fantasia before stating the opening theme as a fugue subject. The piece builds up and moves through sonorous turbulence before a climactic statement of the ostinato and the return of the tranquil chorale.

The Final from Louis Vierne's sixth (and last) symphony is cast in Rondo form. After a chromatic introduction, the brilliant opening theme appears and is then immediately repeated over an ostinato. A chromatic secondary theme is presented followed by a return of the opening theme. In the middle section, a melancholic theme is introduced but proves to be joyous in its exhilarating reappearance over B major pedal scales.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jonathan Casady is pursuing the Master of Music degree in Organ Performance at the University of Florida, where he holds the graduate assistant position in the carillon department. His responsibilities include a weekly performance schedule on the 61-bell carillon housed in Century Tower, as well as performances for commencements, convocations, the Carillon Recital Series, and the annual Sacred Music Workshop. In addition to his duties at the university, Casady is the Organ Scholar at Gainesville's Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, where he assists in service playing, conducting, and accompanying during liturgies and concerts. He also assists in directing the chorister's program, which is affiliated with the Royal School of Church Music in America (RSCMA).

Casady assisted in music sales in Michigan at the 2011 joint congresses of the Guild of Carillonneurs in North America (GCNA) and World Carillon Federation (WCF), where he and several UF carillon studio members performed in the GCNA 75th Anniversary Concert.

As a student of Dr. Jeremy Chesman, Casady graduated in 2010 with the Bachelor of Music degree in Organ Performance from Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri. While in residence at Missouri State, Casady held the university's largest scholarship in the keyboard area, performed several recitals at various venues in the Springfield area, and served as organist at Springfield's Covenant Presbyterian Church. Prior to his position at Covenant, he worked with children's choirs at Springfield's Schweitzer United Methodist Church.