

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS
presents

SENIOR RECITAL

Laura Bottei, organ

APRIL 18, 2021 | 3:00^{PM} CDT
MADONNA DELLA STRADA CHAPEL

From the studio of Steven Betancourt



Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

PROGRAM

<i>Comes Autumn Time</i>	Leo Sowerby (1895–1968)
Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor, BWV 582	J.S. Bach (1685–1750)
“Naiades” from <i>Pièces de Fantaisie</i>	Louis Vierne (1870–1937)
Choral No. 2 in B Minor	César Franck (1822–1890)
<i>Aspects of Glory</i> II. My Home in Glory III. Tambourines	Libby Larsen (1950–)
Symphony No. 4 IV. Romance	Louis Vierne
Prelude and Fugue in B Major	Marcel Dupré (1886–1971)

BIOGRAPHY

Laura Bottei will be graduating from Loyola University Chicago in May 2021 with degrees in music and psychology. A native of Green Bay, Wisconsin, Laura began studying piano at the age of 5. At Loyola, she studies organ with Steven Betancourt, voice with Sarah Ponder, and previously studied piano with Anthony Molinaro. Laura has had the joy of serving the past two years as the organ scholar at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago. She also spent summer 2020 as the resident organist on Squirrel Island in Maine, providing music for chapel services and organizing a concert series. Outside of organ and church music, Laura enjoys yoga, gymnastics, dogs, and vegan food. Following graduation, Laura will be pursuing her Master of Music in organ performance.

PROGRAM NOTES

One of Sowerby's best known organ works, *Comes Autumn Time* is a lively overture that was written in 1916 and soon after arranged for full orchestra. This work was commissioned by and premiered at Fourth Presbyterian Church right here in Chicago, where Sowerby served as the associate organist. Throughout the piece, Sowerby interweaves two main themes—the spirited theme that appears initially in the pedal, and the more legato theme that appears on many different reed voices. *Comes Autumn Time* is best performed on an instrument with lots of colors, as Sowerby calls for many different stop combinations to create an orchestral, full, constantly changing soundscape.

The Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 582 begins with a lone voice stating the passacaglia theme, which was almost certainly taken from the *Christe verset* of André Raison's *Messe du Deuxième Ton*. Bach used this pattern for the first half of the passacaglia theme, and entirety of the fugal subject. In the passacaglia, Bach takes us through 21 variations of the ostinato—primarily in the bass, but also appearing at times in the upper voices. The fugue commences with Raison's ostinato subject and the countersubject simultaneously. The texture gradually builds to the grand ending, where the subject is stated one final time before the final cadence and coda.

"Naiades" is from the fourth suite of Louis Vierne's *Pièces de Fantaisie*, a set that Vierne played at his final concert minutes before his death on the organ bench. The piece is based on the image of naiades/nyads, the mythological water nymph daughters of Poseidon. The constantly running scales throughout the piece clearly depict the freely flowing water, whereas the motives played on strings in the B section evoke more of a singing feeling. Although short, this piece is a fantastic display of virtuosity, chromaticism, and impressionism.

The second of three chorales by César Franck, Choral no. 2 in B minor once again brings a passacaglia and fugue to the program, albeit looser in form than that of Bach's. This piece in particular is perfect for the French-style Goulding and Wood organ at Madonna della Strada, which is especially evident at the conclusion of each section with the beautiful Voix Humaine singing out, accompanied by light flutes and strings. Between the passacaglia and fugue-like section is a majestic, fantasy-like interlude filled with bright reeds and virtuosic arpeggios. Written in the last year of his life, this choral and its two counterparts are said to be like a musical last will and testament of Franck.

Aspects of Glory is an organ suite of three movements composed by contemporary American composer Libby Larsen, who describes the pieces as "a group of essays...on the word 'glory.'" All three pieces are based on texts

of glory and praise to God. The second piece, “My Home in Glory,” brings an ethereal, though at times tumultuous, exploration of human perseverance through adversity. Beginning with a solo melody, the movement develops this theme throughout before returning to the soft solo melody, leaving a wandering but peaceful feeling. “Tambourines” was inspired by Langston Hughes’s play *Tambourines to Glory*. This piece utilizes the rhythm and accent of the words of the play’s title to create a lively rhythmic energy. Although the meter is constantly changing, the quick rhythms weave seamlessly into a glorious whole, complete with the eponymous tambourine imitated by the high mixture stop of the cymbale.

II. My Home in Glory

Oh! Glory, Oh! Glory, Oh! Glory,
There’s room enough in Paradise
To have a home in Glory!

–Spiritual

III. Tambourines

Tambourines!
Tambourines!
Tambourines!
To the glory of God!

–Langston Hughes

The penultimate movement of Vierne’s Fourth Symphony, the Romance, serves as a lighter, more hopeful contrast to the darker Prélude and Final of the symphony. The latter two movements are in the key of G minor, whereas this movement is in the opposite, major tonality, and the opposite tonic on the circle of fifths, D-flat. A sort of reprieve from the darkness of Vierne’s life which is seen in much of his music, this movement’s truly symphonic nature recalls the work of Vierne’s teacher and predecessor, Charles-Marie Widor.

The first in Marcel Dupré’s collection of *Trois Preludes et Fugues*, the Prelude and Fugue in B Major displays what is some of the most technically spectacular organ repertoire of the twentieth century. The prelude begins with ascending chordal figurations, which continue throughout and nicely bookend this program in contrast to Sowerby’s descending chordal figuration. The fugal subject nicely complements the theme that is presented in the prelude as Dupré skillfully weaves through a variety of key areas. The fugue culminates in a restatement of the subject in two different voices at different harmonic rhythms, before returning to the ascending chordal figurations for an extravagant, exciting ending.

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