

Sunday, July 16, 2017

3:00pm

Madonna della Strada Chapel

## Jan Kraybill, Organ

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### CONVERSATIONS: The Art of Interaction

"The Conversation" from <i>Close Encounters of the Third Kind</i>	John Williams (b.1932) transcribed by Jan Kraybill
Meine Seele erhebt den Herren (My soul magnifies the Lord): Fugue on the Magnificat, BWV 733	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Variations on "Mein junges Leben hat ein End" (My young life is ending)	Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)
Pageant	Leo Sowerby (1895-1968)
Conversations: Seven Character Pieces for Organ (2016) Pronouncement Tête-à-Tête Quiet Talk Persuasion	Dale E. Ramsey (b.1946)
Scherzo from <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) transcribed by Samuel P. Warren
Prélude et Danse Fuguée (Prelude and Dance Fugue)	Gaston Litaize (1909-1991)
Variationen und Fuge über "Heil di rim Siegerkranz" (Variations and Fugue on "Hail to Thee in Victor's Crown")	Max Reger (1873-1916)

*Biography and Program Notes following on succeeding pages.*



**Jan Kraybill** is a musical leader and dynamic speaker; a concert organist, pianist, and harpsichordist; an educator and organ consultant; and an enthusiastic cheerleader for the power of music to change lives for the better.

Dr. Kraybill is Executive Director of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, a non-profit organization whose mission is to encourage, promote, and enliven congregational singing. In addition, she serves as Organ Conservator at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City, Missouri, and Organist-in-Residence at the international headquarters of Community of Christ in Independence, Missouri. In these roles she plays and oversees the care of the Kansas City metro area's three largest pipe organs: Community of Christ Auditorium's 113-rank Aeolian-Skinner (installed in 1959) and Temple's 102-rank Casavant (1993), and the 102-rank Julia Irene Kauffman Casavant (2012) at the Kauffman Center's Helzberg Hall. Throughout her career Jan has performed solo and collaborative roles in musical events, lead international hymn festivals, taught workshops, inspired audiences and congregations, and been a resource for worship musicians.

While in high school in Colby, Kansas, Jan was invited to play her first European piano recital, in Andover, England. Since then she has performed in many venues in United States, and abroad in Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, South Korea, Tahiti, and The Netherlands. She has undertaken multiple tours of the United Kingdom, including organ concerts at the grand cathedrals of Chester, Exeter, and St. Paul's in London. Her most recent British trip, in summer 2015, included designing and leading a hymn festival at the International Gathering of Hymn Societies at Cambridge University.

Jan has been featured at regional and national conventions of the American Guild of Organists (AGO), the Hymn Society, and other musicians' organizations, and has been heard on Kansas Public Radio and American Public Media's nationally broadcast program *Pipedreams*. She has collaborated as organist, pianist, and harpsichordist with many ensembles, including the Bach Aria Soloists, the Phoenix Chorale, the Kansas City Chorale, the Kansas City Symphony and Symphony Chorus, and others.

Four solo CDs and several collaborative recordings are available. *Two by 2: Two Organ Symphonies on Two Magnificent Organs* features both of Community of Christ's pipe organs. *Rejoice and Remember: Piano Music for All Seasons* contains favorite hymn arrangements. The Auditorium Organ: Fifty Years of Excellence celebrated that organ's 50th anniversary in 2009. The first solo CD of the Julia Irene Kauffman Casavant, *Organ Polychrome*, was released by Reference Recordings in 2014. Jan has recorded for Reference with the Kansas City Symphony on several occasions; their most recent disc, containing Saint-Saën's "Organ" Symphony, was nominated for a Grammy in 2015.

Dr. Kraybill earned piano performance and education degrees from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas, and a doctorate in organ performance from the University of Missouri-Kansas City's Conservatory of Music and Dance. In 2010 she achieved the distinction of Fellow of the AGO, organists' highest certification level. In 2013 she was named Musician of the Year by the Kansas City Musical Club, and in 2014 the UMKC Conservatory honored her with its Alumni Achievement Award.

Jan has served in many elected local, regional, and national roles in the AGO, The Hymn Society, and the Master Teacher Institute. She teaches workshops on fostering personal creativity. She is a member of Mensa. Her extra-musical interests include antiquing, lace making, and riding her Harley-Davidson motorcycle with her husband Allan.

Visit [www.jankraybill.com](http://www.jankraybill.com) for more information and Jan's concert schedule.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### **"The Conversation" from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind***

**John Williams (b. 1932)**

*"If we can talk to aliens in Close Encounters of the Third Kind, why not with the Reds in the Cold War?" – Spielberg*

In 1977, the third movie collaboration between director Steven Spielberg and composer John Williams envisioned communication between humans and aliens. Roy Neary (played by Richard Dreyfuss) encounters a UFO and becomes obsessed with learning more and contacting others who have had similar experiences. Simultaneously, the U.S. government pairs with a French researcher, Claude Lacombe (François Truffaut) who theorizes that a musical language could best communicate with aliens. In the movie's defining moment, set at Devil's Tower in Wyoming, a huge alien spacecraft responds to Lacombe's five-note musical "question," and an amazing conversation follows. Roy, Claude, and other humans decide to join the aliens on their journey. As Claude walks up the mothership's ramp and meets an alien face-to-face, he tries using hand signals that correspond to the five-note musical phrase. The alien smiles and responds with the same gestures, and they walk together into the ship.

### **Meine Seele erhebt den Herren**

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)**

**(My soul magnifies the Lord): Fugue on the Magnificat, BWV 733**

*"All one has to do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself." – Bach*

The Magnificat is Mary's response to the angel Gabriel, who has just informed her that she will soon be the mother of the long-awaited Savior of the world. She exclaims, "My soul magnifies the Lord ... my spirit rejoices ...!" It's no surprise that the most significant organ composer of all time, the devout Lutheran musician Johann Sebastian Bach, was inspired multiple times in his career to set this Biblical moment to music. He used as his basis a well-known hymn of his time, whose German text was written by Martin Luther and whose tune was a variant of the *tonus peregrinus* of Gregorian chant. In the Fugue on the Magnificat for organ, the hymn tune is heard most clearly in the slow-moving line played by the feet. The addition of this pedal melody late in the composition is the final step in the buildup of voices "magnifying" Mary's praise.

**Variations on “Mein junges Leben hat ein End”  
(My young life is ending)**

**Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621)**

*“All nature itself . . . is nothing but a perfect music that the creator causes to resound in the ears of man, to give him pleasure and to draw him gently to Himself.” – Sweelinck*

A popular secular song of Sweelinck’s time, “Mein junges Leben” explores the conversation we all will eventually have with the concept of our own mortality. It mourns, “My young life is ending, with its joy and sorrow. My poor soul must be separated from my body. My life can continue no longer, it is weak and must pass, hence my sorrow.” During Sweelinck’s lifetime, his home city of Amsterdam moved from its Catholic traditions to Calvinist reforms which restricted the performance of virtuosic organ music in church. Sweelinck was therefore employed as an organist by the city, not the church. His daily noontime public organ concerts at the Oude Kerk (Old Church) in the center of Amsterdam attracted huge crowds. This short set of variations is his best-known keyboard work.

**Pageant**

**Leo Sowerby (1895–1968)**

*“The danger menacing American musicians is foreign domination. We must be free to develop American music as an expression of American ideals, and not be continually expected to pour our ideas into ready-made molds of old-world manufacture.” – Sowerby*

The church musician, teacher, and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Leo Sowerby has been called the “Dean of American church music.” Born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, he began composing at age ten, and the Chicago Symphony premiered his violin concerto when he was just eighteen. He was largely self-taught as an organist, but developed his skills such that he very successfully served in important posts as organist and choirmaster at Fourth Presbyterian and Saint James Episcopal churches in Chicago. Later, he was the founding director of the College of Church Musicians at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Sowerby composed Pageant in 1931 for the Vatican’s organist, Fernando Germani, whom he had met during his residency in Rome as the winner of the American Prix de Rome. Germani was known for his amazing pedal technique, and Sowerby’s score features a phenomenally virtuosic pedal part. Germani’s response: “Now write for me something difficult!”

**Conversations: Seven Character Pieces for Organ (2016)**

**Dale E. Ramsey (b. 1946)**

*“I’m still looking for that ‘perfect’ organ! But, that has been a life-time pursuit . . .” – Ramsey*

Dale Ramsey has contributed to the musical life in his hometown of Kansas City for decades, as a full-time church musician and composer, as Dean of the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists, as one of the volunteer staff organists at Community of Christ headquarters, and as founder/owner of MusiGraphics Productions, a music engraving and editing firm. His compositions have won many awards. About Conversations he has written, “This group of ‘character’ pieces are not profound, intellectual, historic, serious or sacred. Rather, they are light-hearted, brief, clever perhaps, even cheerful secular works . . . As a set they call upon a wide variety of colors and dynamic levels of a modern pipe organ, including the quietest sounds up through the thundering of the full organ.” You will hear four of the seven movements today. Each is dedicated to a person in the Kansas City metro: “Pronouncement” to John Schaefer, recently retired after 40 years of service at Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral; “Tête-à-Tête” to organist Sharon Hettinger; “Quiet Talk” to Marcia Ramsey “my wife of 50 years”; and “Persuasion” to me.

## Scherzo from A Midsummer Night's Dream

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

*"The essence of the beautiful is unity in variety." – Mendelssohn*  
*"Lord, what fools these mortals be!" – Puck, in A Midsummer Night's Dream*

The German composer Felix Mendelssohn's fascination with Shakespeare's play about love and magic, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, began when he was a teenager; at age seventeen he composed an orchestral overture inspired by it. At thirty-three, when he was music director of the King's Academy of the Arts and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, he was commissioned by King Frederick of Prussia to write incidental music for a performance of the play. Many of the resulting pieces have become famous separate from Shakespeare's drama – for example, Mendelssohn's now-ubiquitous Wedding March. He wrote the whimsical Scherzo as an intermezzo between Acts I and II. It depicts a magical fairy world, especially the joke-loving Puck, and assigns certain instruments to "play" the roles of Shakespeare's characters. The woodwinds symbolize fairies, the horns and trumpets are humans, and the strings provide either background or "spice" as needed. This transcription for organ was written by Samuel P. Warren (1841–1915), a founding member of the AGO.

## Prélude et Danse Fuguée (Prelude and Dance Fugue)

Gaston Litaize (1909–1991)

*"... the definition that I give my students of the four qualities that a great interpreter must have: (1) to be a virtuoso, (2) to be a musician, (3) to be an artist, (4) to be intelligent ..."* – Litaize

Left blind by an illness just after his birth, Gaston Litaize became part of a long tradition of famous and successful organists who studied at France's National Institute for the Blind in Paris. Later he became an instructor at the Institute in addition to his career as an internationally-known touring and recording artist. He was a pupil of both Vierne and Dupré at the Paris Conservatory; Jean Guillou and Olivier Messiaen were his contemporaries as a student; and in turn Litaize was Olivier Latry's instructor – all of these individuals are known as innovators, each in his own way, during amazingly creative decades of French organ composition and playing. Litaize composed his joyous *Prélude et danse fuguée* in 1964 as a jury piece at the Conservatory, and it has become his most famous piece. Its playful rhythms and jazz-like harmonies within the structure of the baroque prelude and fugue form are examples of the experimentalism that permeated both secular and church music in the mid- to late-twentieth century.

## Variationen und Fuge über "Heil dir im Siegerkranz" (Variations and Fugue on "Hail to Thee in Victor's Crown")

Max Reger (1873–1916)

*"The pig and the artist are only appreciated after their death." – Reger*

Max Reger has been called the greatest German composer of organ music since Bach. He was also a performing musician, conductor, and instructor, most notably at the Royal Conservatory in Leipzig and in the court of Duke Georg II of Saxe-Meiningen. His virtuosic organ music is his richest legacy.

Despite its German title, American audiences today soon realize upon hearing Reger's *Variations and Fugue on "Heil dir im Siegerkranz"* that this work is based on a very familiar tune. But one doesn't need to be an American

citizen to identify with it. Reger wrote his Variations in 1901, at the suggestion of his publisher, to honor England's Queen Victoria, who had died in January of that year. Victoria's subjects knew the melody as "God Save the Queen." Reger's fellow citizens in Germany would have recognized it as their national anthem (until 1918). It was the Prussian anthem beginning as early as 1795. In addition to these, the list of countries which have used this tune to promote their own national unity literally spans from A to Z, including the current or former nations of Australia, Barbados, Bavaria, Canada, Greece, Iceland, Imperial Russia, Jamaica, the Kingdom of Hawaii, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Norway, Rhodesia, Saxony, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tuvalu, Wales, and Zimbabwe.

The composer of the tune is unknown. The Oxford Companion to Music mentions its similarities to a Gregorian chant melody, but also points out that it also resembles a Renaissance dance tune, a 1619 keyboard piece by John Bull, several works by Henry Purcell, and an old Scottish carol. It also lists many misattributions which have been proven to be false. It concludes that the best attribution is simply "traditional." Nearly 150 classical composers, including Beethoven, Haydn, Brahms, Liszt, Debussy, Rossini, Verdi, Elgar, and Britten have used this tune in their compositions.

So, when we in the United States hear or sing our beloved "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," we should remember that the anonymous tune we sing actually has no country at all – or, perhaps more appropriately, it is a common ground we can find with many of the Earth's peoples!