

Julia Tucker, Organ

Tautology

An exploration of ostinato forms through five centuries of organ repertoire
Organ Hall | March 19, 2019 | 7:30 p.m.

Program

Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 582	J.S. Bach (1685-1750)
Upon La Mi Re My Lady Carey's Dompe	Anon. 16 th century Anon. 16 th century
O Antiphon Sequence	Cecilia McDowall (b. 1951)
	Joel Morehouse, Tenor
Passacaglia in G minor, from <i>Apparatus Musico-Organisticus</i>	Georg Muffat (b. 1653 – 1704)
From the <i>Buxheimer Orgelbuch</i> Praebulum super mi Redeutes in mi	
Passacaglia in E minor from Organ Sonata No. 8, Op. 132	Josef Rheinberger (1839 – 1901)

School of Music

ASU Herberger Institute for
Design and the Arts
Arizona State University

Program Notes

J.S. Bach's **Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor** is one of his most well known and loved compositions for organ, having been transcribed by many composers in the 20th century. The work consists of twenty variations over a repeating bass line, immediately followed by a double fugue in which one of the subjects is the aforementioned bass line. As with many of Bach's works, the manuscript does not exist, but scholars believe the work was composed in Bach's early twenties. The breadth and scope of the variations and the compositional prowess that underlays the architecture of the piece speak to the precociousness of a young man acutely aware of his own genius.

These two dances by anonymous English composers both date from the 16th century and exemplify early use of ground bass patterns. **Upon La Mi Re** is a series of variations over the repeating ground bass which gain speed and intensity as the piece continues. The Lady Carey of **My Lady Carey's Dompe** may refer to Mary Boleyn, one of Henry VIII's mistresses and the sister of his second wife, Anne Boleyn. The word dompe is of Irish origin, and can refer to a dirge or melancholic love song. It is an oddly fitting choice, considering the fate of the two sisters.

Cecilia McDowall's **O Antiphon Sequence** was commissioned by the American Guild of Organists to premiere at their 2018 national convention. The movements are responses and meditations on each of the O Antiphons, which are Gregorian chants sung at Vespers leading up until Christmas. Each of the chants starts with addressing the Messiah by a different Old Testament name, and each chant references the prophecies of Isaiah concerning his arrival. McDowall has selected one specific phrase from each O Antiphon to construct each of her movements around. Each movement also contains a musical reference to its specific O Antiphon. Joel Morehouse will sing each O Antiphon before McDowall's meditation on it is played.

Georg Muffat is an example of a true "internationalist" composer. Born and educated in France and of Scottish ancestry, he eventually settled in Germany for the greater portion of his career. His only publication for organ is his 1690 *Apparatus Musico-Organisticus*, which contains twelve toccatas, a chaconne, an air and the **Passacaglia in G minor**. Unlike Bach and Rheinberger's passacaglias, Muffat's does not have a repeating bass line throughout the work. Instead it is structured as a series of variations on a repeating harmonic pattern, with a refrain that appears several times throughout the work.

Praeambulum Super Mi and **Redeuntes In Mi** both come from the *Buxheimer Orgelbuch*, a German manuscript dated from the late 15th century. These pieces would have probably have served to set the key or pitch for the sung chants, and so they make a fitting introduction to Rheinberger's **Passacaglia in E Minor**.

Josef Rheinberger was a prolific 19th century German composer who is remembered primarily for his sacred music and organ works. Out of the twenty organ sonatas that he composed, this passacaglia from the eighth sonata has enjoyed particular fame in the 20th and 21st century. The blending together of the "old fashioned" passacaglia form with rich romantic harmonies is a thrilling combination! On the Fritts organ in particular, the piece helps to show off the wide variety of tone colors available on the instrument.