

Organ Meditations for Lent and Holy Week



**Presented by Members of the Denver Rocky Mountain Chapter,
American Guild of Organists, and Friends**

7:30 p.m. Friday, February 23, 2024
St. John's Episcopal Church, Boulder



PROGRAM

Please reserve applause until the end of the entire program.

Readers: Amy French and Andrew Halladay

Trilogy for Easter

- I. Fanfare (Triumphant Entry)
- II. Soliloquy (From Gethsemane to the Tomb)

Eurydice V. Osterman
(b. 1950)

Linda Mack, organist

Reading: Byzantine Troparion of the Burial of Christ

Three Meditations for Viola and Organ

- II. Lenten Mourning Tears

Adolphus Hailstork
(b. 1941)

Aaron Hirsch, organist

Matthew Dane, violist

Reading: “‘Remember me’ implored the Thief!” by Emily Dickinson

Sept Chorals-Poèmes d’orgue pour les sept paroles du Xrist, op. 67

- II. Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso
- V. Sitio

Charles Tournemire
(1870-1939)

Isaac Johnson, organist

Reading: From the Bhagavad Gita

Finale from Satyagraha

Philip Glass
(b. 1937)

(arr. Michael Rieman, adapt. Donald Joyce)

David Vogels, organist

Reading: From Martin Luther King Jr.

Adoration

Florence Price
(1887-1953)

Lydia Morrongiello, organist

Reading: From the New Zealand Prayer Book

**Choralfantasie on “Gib dich zufrieden und sei stille,”
op. 89**

Jan Koetsier
(1911-2006)

Joseph Galema, organist

Daniel Nebel, hornist

Reading: From the Chan Buddhist Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch

Six Easy Voluntaries, Second Set
Andante in A minor

Kate Loder
(1825-1904)

Daniel Nebel, organist

Reading: From "O Black and Unknown Bards" by James Weldon Johnson

Elegy

William Grant Still
(1895-1978)

Andrew Crisman, organist

Reading: From the Te Deum

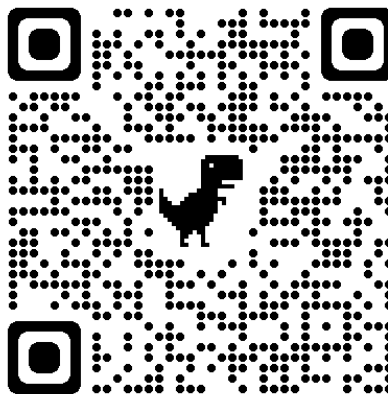
Te Deum, op. 11

Jeanne Demessieux
(1921-1968)

Yinying Luo, organist

You are invited to a reception and music swap in the narthex following the concert.

Your donations to the Denver Rocky Mountain Chapter, American Guild of Organists, will help defray the costs of this program and support upcoming programs. Cash, checks, and credit cards will be gratefully accepted at the welcome desk in the narthex, or you can use the QR code below to make a donation with your smartphone. We now partner with Zeffy.com, a 100% free fundraising platform for nonprofits, to process your payment. Zeffy covers all transaction fees, so your full payment goes directly to the Denver Rocky Mountain Chapter. At checkout, Zeffy will ask for a donation to support its work. If you don't wish to contribute to Zeffy, simply click the dropdown menu, choose "Other," and change the donation to \$0. **Please check your junk/spam folder if you do not receive payment confirmation.**



Program Notes

Eurydice Osterman's **Trilogy for Easter** was commissioned in 2020 by Carson Cooman, Research Associate in Music and Composer in Residence at Harvard Memorial Church. The opening Fanfare (Triumphant Entry) is a majestic depiction of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey on Palm Sunday. Although the piece is tonal, it employs secundal and quartal sonorities and harmonic shifts. The Soliloquy (From Gethsemane to the Tomb) is a slow movement featuring constant harmonic motion, modal melodies, and pedal scale passages. Scenes portrayed include the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, the journey to the Cross, Christ hanging on the Cross, and the doleful moment of the cessation of life. The movement concludes with an unresolved chord representing temporary repose in the tomb. Osterman, a retired professor of music at Oakwood University in Alabama, has been commissioned to write an organ solo for the 2024 AGO National Convention in San Francisco.

Commissioned for the 2016 AGO National Convention in Houston, Adolphus Hailstork's **Lenten Mourning Tears** is the middle movement of what became a three-movement suite for viola and organ. Hauntingly beautiful and filled with crushing melancholy, it shows the composer's deft hand in expressive lyricism and simply effective harmonic accompaniment in its interplay between the two instruments. At times idiomatic Americana, at others seemingly in the lugubrious *Tristan und Isolde* style, the piece guides its listeners on a journey through the human condition, asking us how we can make the world a better place.

Charles Tournemire's **Sept Chorals-Poèmes d'orgue pour les sept paroles du Xrist** joins a long tradition of musical reflections on the Seven Last Words of Christ as recorded in the four gospels. Tournemire's contribution is somewhat unique, however, in that it is purely instrumental, with no vocal parts. The seven movements are dense and technical, sitting on the fence between late Romantic chromatic tonality and modern, expressionistic freedom. At first listen, the movements seem as free and unfettered as Tournemire's famous improvisations, but in fact most of them are structured around the following "thirst" theme:



This passage appears in the middle of *Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso* ("Today you will be with me in paradise"), before the music segues into a mysterious, dreamlike odyssey meant to evoke the otherworldliness of heaven itself. The thirst theme is the central motif of *Sitio* ("I thirst"), appearing starkly at the opening of the piece and then winding and snaking through the movement as an expression of Christ's physical agony.

Satyagraha (1979) is the second opera in Philip Glass's seminal "portrait trilogy" based on historical personalities, along with *Einstein on the Beach* (1976) and *Akhmaten* (1983). *Satyagraha*, the story of Mahatma Gandhi's formative years in South Africa, is divided into three acts, each subtitled for a key figure in Gandhi's philosophical line: Leo Tolstoy (representing the past), Rabindranath Tagore (the present), and Martin Luther King Jr. (the future). The opera is sung in Sanskrit to texts from the *Bhagavad Gita*, but Glass uses the words more as building blocks, in the same way as the modular units in his minimalist musical style. The third movement ends with Gandhi declaiming the passage read tonight; in at least one staging, Dr. King is seen (but not heard) delivering a fiery sermon in the background. In this organ arrangement, the tenor's voice is taken by the right foot of the pedal. The registration was chosen by the performer to match Glass's orchestration as nearly as possible.

Florence Price is considered the first Black woman composer to be programmed by a major American orchestra, when her Symphony No. 1 was performed by the Chicago Symphony in 1933. Although her oeuvre of more than 300 compositions includes symphonic works, concertos, chamber music, choral pieces, and solos for piano and organ, her work has only recently received widespread recognition. In the organ solo, **Adoration**, Price's Romantic development of melodic phrases and the underlying lush harmonies seem to be influenced by her earlier experience as an organist who accompanied silent films. Accordingly, tonight's organ registration captures some of the emotional sounds of a theater organ.

Dutch composer and conductor Jan Koetsier led the Concertgebouw Orchestra from 1942 to 1948 and became the first conductor of the Bavarian Radio Orchestra in 1950. He taught at the Munich Hochschule für Musik for many years, and his compositions are particularly well known among brass musicians; he wrote pieces for the leading German hornists of his generation, including Peter Damm, Marie-Louise Neunecker, Engelbert Schmid, and Michael Höltzel. Composed in 1981, the **Choralfantasie** is based on a chorale tune by Jakob Hintze (1622-1702), "Gib dich zufrieden und sei stille" ("Be thou contented and still").

English pianist-composer Kate Fanny Loder came from a family of prominent musicians in Somerset. She studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London and performed the Mendelssohn Piano Concerto at the Hanover Square Rooms on May 27, 1843, which likely marked her solo debut. The next year, at age 18, Loder was appointed the first female professor of harmony at the Royal Academy. In 1851, she married Sir Henry Thompson and ceased performing publicly, but she continued to play in private salons, teach privately, and compose until her death in 1904. Loder published two sets of **Easy Organ Voluntaries** with the English publishing firm Novello, in 1889 and 1891.

William Grant Still, known as the "Dean of African-American Composers," was born in Woodville, Miss., and raised in Little Rock, Ark. Although his mother sent him to Wilberforce University to study medicine, Still used the opportunity to conduct the university band and arrange music for the band and string quartet. He ultimately left college two months before graduation to publish music with W.C. Handy and Charles Pace and to play in Handy's band. After studying composition at Oberlin, Still made a living as a freelance musician in the 1920s, working for many of the leading figures of the Harlem Renaissance. His first major orchestral composition, the *Afro-American Symphony*, was performed in 1931 by the Rochester Philharmonic under Howard Hanson, making it the first work by a Black composer to be performed by a majority-white orchestra in the United States. **Elegy**, one of only two works Still wrote for organ, was commissioned by the Long Beach, Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Valley District chapters of the AGO and first published in 1963.

French organist, pianist, composer, and teacher Jeanne Demessieux studied privately with Marcel Dupré before joining his organ class at the Paris Conservatory in 1939. She won first prizes in both organ and improvisation in 1941. Demessieux was the first female organist to sign a recording contract with Decca, as well as the first to perform at Westminster Abbey. She was the titulaire at Saint-Esprit for 29 years and at La Madeleine in Paris from 1962 until her death in 1968. Demessieux was known for her impeccable technique, improvisations, and memorization. Her repertoire included the complete organ works of Bach and Franck, the major organ works of Liszt and Mendelssohn, and all of Dupré's organ works up to op. 41. She toured extensively in France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, and the United States. As a composer, she is best remembered for the Six Études (1946) and the **Te Deum** (1959).

The Artists

Linda Mack grew up in the San Francisco Bay area, where she began musical instruction at age 6, studying piano, organ, and brass instruments. After completing bachelor's and master's degrees in organ performance and taking up the harpsichord at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich., she moved to Salt Lake City, where she expanded her career as a teacher, performer, and producer of a weekly radio program of organ music, *Te Deum Laudamus*. In 1987, Linda completed a Master of Library Science degree and returned to Michigan, joining the Andrews University faculty as Music Librarian. She continued an active performing career as keyboardist and program annotator for the Andrews University Orchestras, director of the university's Early Music Ensemble, and music director for Episcopal churches in southwest Michigan. In 2012, Linda moved to Denver; she now sings in the St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Choir and St. Martin's Festival Singers, performs as a substitute organist around the Front Range, and is active in the Denver Rocky Mountain Chapter of the AGO, currently serving as Sub-Dean. She is also involved in a variety of musical editing and writing projects.

Aaron Hirsch is a versatile and collaborative musician who has performed extensively throughout the Midwest, Pacific Northwest, and Mountain West. Currently serving as Principal Organist at St. John's Episcopal Church in Boulder, he directs the St. John's Music Society, an organization that brings musicians from near and far to perform in the incredible acoustic space of St. John's. He also has extensive experience as an orchestral conductor, harpsichordist, and tenor. Aaron holds a master's degree in orchestral conducting and a bachelor's degree in organ performance. He was a conducting fellow at the Oregon Bach Festival and won a DAAD scholarship to conduct at the Dresden Music Masterclasses in fall 2015. While working toward his bachelor's degree, he also received a DAAD fellowship to attend the Stuttgart Hochschule für Musik in 2012.

Matthew Dane serves as Principal Violist of Opera Colorado and is a member of both the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra (ROCO) and the Boulder Piano Quartet. He has appeared as a soloist with the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, the Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado, ROCO, Ars Nova Singers, and the St. Martin's Chamber Choir, among others; his solo and chamber performances have been featured on NPR's *Performance Today*, BBC's *Channel 3*, and the meditation website *The Well*. A committed teacher, he was a tenured faculty at the University of Oklahoma; he now coaches chamber music at Greenwood Music Camp in the summers, teaches at the University of Northern Colorado, directs the chamber music program for the Greater Boulder Youth Orchestra, and actively maintains a private studio.

Isaac Johnson is a PhD student in musicology at the University of Colorado-Boulder, where he studies the history of Gregorian chant and Catholic liturgy in North America. He has performed organ recitals across the United States and Canada, including at the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Denver and at Grace and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Colorado Springs. In partial fulfillment of CU's graduate certificate in music theory, he will be giving a lecture-recital on modality in the early works of Olivier Messiaen at St. John's Episcopal Church in April. Isaac serves as organist at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Longmont, Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Denver, and St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center in Boulder. He holds degrees from Samford University and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music.

David Vogels, CAGO, has been the primary organist at several Denver-area churches, including St. John's Episcopal Church in Boulder and Wheat Ridge United Methodist Church, and currently works on a freelance basis. He has performed recitals in Colorado and Texas and has commissioned works for organ by William Albright, Naji Hakim, Dan Locklair, Stephen Paulus, and C. Curtis-Smith. Author of the monthly Commentary for *The American Organist* magazine, he has recently translated *Olivier Messiaen's Livre du Saint Sacrement: Mystery of the Eucharistic Presence* by Dorothee Bauer, from the original German for publication by Brill | Schöningh (available from the publisher or Amazon). David served six years each as the AGO National Councillor for Competitions and New Music and National Councillor for Professional Concerns; he is a past Dean of the Denver Rocky Mountain Chapter.

Lydia Morrongiello was born into a family of notable organists—maternal grandfather, mother, and uncle—and made her organ debut at age 12. After graduating from the Crane School of Music, State University of New York, Potsdam, she earned her master's degree and doctorate from Columbia University, where she was mentored by Thomas Richner, organist of the Mother Church of Christian Science, Boston, and also studied organ with Anthony Newman. Lydia was the organist for the Columbia University Convocation at Riverside Church in New York City. In 2019, she served as hospitality chairperson for the AGO Southwest Regional Convention in Denver. She is currently the Associate Organist at St. John's Episcopal Church in Boulder, where she is a member of the adult choir and handbell choir.

Joseph Galema serves as Principal Organist at First United Methodist Church in Colorado Springs and as the Collaborative Pianist for the Colorado Springs Chorale. Since September 2008, he has been the organ faculty at the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music. He retired in July 2014 as Music Director and Academy Organist at the United States Air Force Academy, after serving there for 32 years. Joe was born in West Lafayette, Ind., and received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Calvin University in Grand Rapids, Mich. He then studied organ performance with Marilyn Mason at the University of Michigan, where he earned the Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees. Joe holds leadership positions in the Colorado Springs Chapter of the AGO and is currently Treasurer of the Association of Anglican Musicians.

Daniel Nebel is the Organist at Arvada United Methodist Church, Instructor of Horn at Colorado State University Pueblo, and Principal Horn of the Monterey Symphony. An active freelance musician and educator throughout the Front Range, he recently completed a Doctorate of Arts in music performance from the University of Northern Colorado. He also holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and Wichita State University and has studied organ with Lynne Davis, Anne Laver, Christopher Petit, Nicole Marane, and Frances Meier.

Andrew Crisman, SPC, has served as Organist and Pianist for All Saints Episcopal Church in Loveland since 2010. He received his Bachelor of Music degree in music education from the Crane School of Music, State University of New York, Potsdam, in 1996, and his Master of Music degree in trombone performance from the University of Colorado-Boulder in 1998. He has studied piano with Geraldine Rhodes and organ with Brian du Fresne. Andy has taught band and choir in the Thompson School District since 1999, and has been President of the Thompson Education Association for the past ten years. He also serves as bass trombonist with the Longmont Symphony Orchestra. Andy lives in Loveland with his wife, Danielle, and two 16-year-old sons, Jacob and Herbie.

Yinying Luo currently serves as the Associate Minister of Music and Organist at Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church in Denver. She formerly served as organist at First Presbyterian Church in Santa Barbara, Calif. She received her Master of Music degree in organ performance from the Juilliard School in New York City and in church music from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, as well as the Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Ga. Past recital venues have included St. John the Divine, St. Paul the Apostle, and Central Synagogue in New York City; Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Atlanta; Paderborn Cathedral in Germany; and Shenzhen Concert Hall, Hangzhou Sicheng Protestant Church, Chongyi Protestant Church, and Fuzhou Flower Lane Protestant Church in China. Yinying was one of 20 participants in the 18-hour J.S. Bach Organ Marathon at St. Peter's Church, New York City, in 2014, which was livestreamed through WQXR.

Upcoming Events

Denver Rocky Mountain Chapter, American Guild of Organists

PERFORMANCE ADDED: 7 p.m. Sunday, April 14, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, Boulder

7 p.m. Friday, April 19, Augustana Lutheran Church, Denver

“A Harpsichord Showcase: Bach and Beyond”: Cosponsored by Augustana Arts and featuring lead harpsichordist Jeremiah Otto, this program will include J.S. Bach's concerto for four harpsichords and a variety of other works by Bach, Couperin, Mozart, and Soler for harpsichords, organ, and strings, plus an original composition for four harpsichords by Otto. Harpsichordists Linda Mack, Mark Alan Filbert, Thomas Strickland, and Aaron Hirsch will also perform. An informal harpsichord walk-and-talk and a reception will follow the concert. Both concerts are free and open to the public. Donations will be accepted at the door for the Boulder program; reservations for the Denver program are requested through AugustanaArts.org (which has a Pay-What-You-Choose ticketing model).

St. John's Music Series

TOMORROW! 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 24

“Songs of Heaven and Earth, Loss and Love”: Soprano Jane Shivick presents a program of sacred and secular arias.

4 p.m. Sunday, March 17

Saxophonist Adam Pelandini returns for another classical program, featuring a work he co-commissioned from David Amram, “Greenwich Village Portraits.”

4 p.m. Sunday, May 19

“Certified Organic Opera”: Soprano Gayla Blaisdell, mezzo-soprano Melissa Schiel, and organist Aaron Hirsch celebrate all things opera by performing famous arias and duets. The accompaniments are all transcribed by Hirsch from the original orchestral sources.