

2009 SEASON
TEA & SYMPHONY
PRESENTED BY KAMBLY

ORGAN SPLENDOUR

Friday 12 June | 11am
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

David Drury
in recital on the
Sydney Opera House Grand Organ

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)
Toccatina and Fugue in F, BWV 540

JOSEPH JONGEN (1873–1953)
Cantabile from
Four Pieces for Organ, Op.37

MARCEL DUPRÉ (1886–1971)
Crucifixion from
Passion Symphony, Op.23

CHARLES-MARIE WIDOR (1844–1937)
Organ Symphony No.6 in G minor, Op.42 No.2

Allegro
Adagio
Intermezzo
Cantabile
Finale



This concert will be recorded
for broadcast across Australia
on ABC Classic FM 92.9.

Estimated timings:
16 minutes, 8 minutes, 8 minutes,
35 minutes

The concert will conclude at
approximately 12.15pm.

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It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this concert in the 2009 Tea & Symphony series.

One of the jewels in the Sydney Opera House crown is its Grand Organ, completed exactly 30 years ago. It's remarkable not just for its immense scale and structural beauty but for its distinctive sound. At least a few times each year it can be heard in concert with the Sydney Symphony, in music like Saint-Saëns' 'Organ' Symphony. But this morning's concert places the Grand Organ in the spotlight and gives us a chance to enjoy some of the magnificent repertoire from the solo organ tradition.

Our soloist is David Drury, a musician well-known to Sydney Symphony audiences, and one of Australia's leading organists. Today he's chosen a program for us that traces the generations of great organist-composers, from Johann Sebastian Bach through the Romantic brilliance of Charles-Marie Widor to the modern voices of Joseph Jongen and Marcel Dupré.

Kambly has epitomised the Swiss tradition of the finest biscuits for three generations. Each masterpiece from the Emmental is a small thank you for life; a declaration of love for the very best; the peak of fine, elegant taste.

Kambly is a way of life, dedicated to all those who appreciate the difference between the best and the merely good. In this way it is fitting that we partner with the internationally acclaimed Sydney Symphony, whose vision is to ignite and deepen people's love of live symphonic music.

We hope you enjoy this morning's program, and look forward to welcoming you to future concerts in the Tea & Symphony series in 2009.



Oscar A. Kambly
Chairman
Kambly of Switzerland

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Organ Splendour

All of the composers represented on today's program were virtuoso organists. Their practical insight into 'the king of instruments' allowed them to write idiomatically for it, even while posing formidable difficulties for the performer.

A number of interesting threads connect these composers and their works (something like the old adage of 'six degrees of separation'): the organ and its players have always been something of a tight-knit group. **Johann Sebastian Bach**, not only by virtue of his place in time but also as one of the towering figures of Western music, stands at the head of this impressive collection of musicians. Schumann's well-known observation that music owes as much to Bach as a religion does to its founder resonates especially deeply with the organ world.

It is a curious fact, at least from a 21st-century perspective, that Bach was recognised more as a performer in his lifetime than a composer. A master of the organ, with an unmatched knowledge of its intricacies and subtleties, it made sense that he would devote to it some of his most superior compositional ideas. The **Tocatta and Fugue in F** is one such superior work. Scholarship suggests that the toccata and fugue might not have been written as a pair, but there is no autograph manuscript to confirm or deny this possibility. It is possible, however, that the markedly contrasting characters of each movement were a deliberate *Affekt*, one Bach cultivated elsewhere, and cultivated often. The Toccata itself is surely one of Bach's most dazzling creations. It's characterised by its canonic opening, its thrilling pedal solos, a series of striking chords in a seemingly endless run of cadences, and sheer irrepressible energy. Note, too, some truly shocking cadences in which Bach moves well beyond the key in which he began. The Fugue is one of Bach's only true double fugues; that is, a fugue with two subjects which combine towards the end of the piece. Although the listener mightn't be able to identify specifics, the first fugue theme is obviously stated in isolation. Following this, the second fugue theme is



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

heard in quicker note values minus the pedal division. The combination of subjects occurs again towards the end of the piece in a stroke of contrapuntal mastery.

The Belgian **Joseph Jongen** knew and loved his Bach, as is evidenced by the list of major organ works he programmed throughout his lifetime, including the F major Toccata and Fugue. Between 1898 and 1902 Jongen visited Germany, Italy and France, had composition lessons with Richard Strauss, and later lived in England. His direct exposure to a number of national styles has led to his music being described as somewhat eclectic in its language, but undoubtedly romantic. At the conclusion of World War I, he returned to Belgium and became Professor of Fugue at the Royal Conservatoire in Brussels. No doubt his extensive knowledge of Bach's works assisted him greatly in undertaking the responsibilities of this post.

The **Cantabile** from **Four Pieces for Organ** (1910) shares a technical trait with the Bach Toccata we have heard in using canon, with the subject in the right hand followed by the left and later vice versa, just as in the Bach. As the title (literally 'in a singing style') suggests, the piece is lyrical in nature, with the canon spinning itself out as a long, singing line. The second section of a tripartite structure provides some contrast in terms of tempo, texture, and key before a return to the initial canonic idea.

Perhaps Jongen's most famous work is the *Symphonic concertante* for organ and orchestra. It was commissioned for performance by the Philadelphia Orchestra with the gigantic organ in the Wanamaker Department Store conducted by Leopold Stokowski. The scheduled performance never came about, and it was only last year that the piece was performed for the first time in its intended setting.

The Wanamaker organ proved to be fertile creative ground for another giant of the French-speaking organ world, **Marcel Dupré**. It was on this organ, in 1922, that Dupré performed an improvisation which would later become the basis for the **Passion Symphony**. His own program note for the work says about the **Crucifixion** movement:

This movement suggests the march to Calvary. The broken



Joseph Jongen (1873–1953)

LEBRECHT MUSIC AND ARTS



Marcel Dupré (1886–1971)

LEBRECHT MUSIC AND ARTS

rhythm of the theme pictures the excruciating pain of the ascent. After this, the sorrowing watchers chant the doleful hymn 'Stabat Mater'.

The 'Stabat Mater', a meditation on Mary's suffering at the foot of the cross, is played first in a detached manner firstly in the pedals, then in a more sustained manner in the manuals. The music is highly chromatic, and charged with the subject matter. The symphony as a whole requires a fine technique of the performer. Many of Dupré's works require a virtuosity like his own. He performed all of the Bach organ works from memory in 1920 at the Paris Conservatoire, in a series of ten major recitals, and repeated this extraordinary feat at the Trocadero in 1921.

Some of Dupré's passion for the music of Bach was, no doubt, stimulated by **Charles-Marie Widor**, with whom he studied composition and fugue. Bach's music was something of a novelty in mid-19th-century Paris, and Widor was to a large degree responsible for making Bach's music more mainstream. Amongst his legacies is an edition of the Bach organ works, produced in collaboration with Albert Schweitzer. (Dupré, not to be outdone, also produced an edition.) But it is not for this noble undertaking that Widor will be most remembered, but for his ten **organ symphonies**, in particular, the famous Toccata from the Fifth.

Charles-Marie Widor (1844–1937) at the organ of Saint-Sulpice Church

LEBRECHT MUSIC AND ARTS



Widor's remarkable contribution to organ music must be seen, however, in light of his close personal and professional relationship with the organ builder Aristide Cavaille-Coll (1811–1899). Cavaille-Coll played a large part, along with Charles Gounod, in Widor's appointment to the post of organist at Saint Sulpice in 1870, a position Widor retained for 64 years until succeeded by Dupré in 1934. The church contained what would prove to be Cavaille-Coll's largest instrument, and one of his most renowned. In a circular manner, music influenced specifications and designs of organs, which in turn influenced the music. A number of commentators have said that Widor's symphonies may more be correctly described as 'suites' for organ, since although they imitate orchestral colours and textures, they do not follow the forms associated with a symphony for orchestral forces. The **Sixth Organ Symphony** is divided into five movements; two slow movements separated by a playful *Intermezzo* which is really a scherzo, and two quicker movements which act as bookends. The work is a substantial utterance in which Widor exhibits a fine sense of craftsmanship, an excellent sense of form, and perhaps above all, a great love and understanding for the work of one of the greatest organ builders of any age.

DR CALVIN BOWMAN ©2009

Performer and composer Calvin Bowman will present the complete Bach organ works at this year's Melbourne International Arts Festival, and a song of his, 'Now Touch the Air Softly', has been recorded by soprano Emma Matthews.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT



The Sydney Symphony is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council and by Arts NSW, Department of the Arts, Sport and Recreation.

ABOUT THE ORGAN

There's a story about an Australian orchestral musician – also an organist – who disappeared from the bus during a rest stop on tour. He was eventually found in the local church, investigating the organ and discussing its specifications with the local organist. Organs are so magnificently complex that – more so than any other instrument – there's an inherent fascination in their construction. Did you know, for example, that the Grand Organ here in the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall is the world's largest known mechanical action pipe organ? That it has 10,154 pipes? The instrument as machine.

But Ronald Sharp, builder of the Grand Organ in the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall, is on record as saying, 'I set out to build a musical instrument, not a piece of machinery.' Despite the record-breaking proportions of the instrument, Sharp's main concern was sound not size. 'I hope music lovers will like it,' he said when it was completed in 1979.

Today's organist, David Drury, points out how central the builder is to the personality of any great organ. Although working within the constraints of a given building or intended musical function (liturgical or concert use, for example), the organ builder's personal 'vision' of a particular sound will always emerge. And when it comes to the Sydney Opera House Grand Organ, Drury says, there is no other instrument like it.

The Grand Organ's mechanical tracker action contributes to something of a baroque character – articulated and sensitive – and the instrument has a warm but relatively gentle sound that most agree is extremely well-suited to earlier music such as Bach. At the same time, says Drury, the organ holds some surprises. Among its repertoire of colours is one that's very close to the harmonic flute stop, invented by Cavallé-Coll in the mid-19th century and favoured in French music. It's a distinctive breathy, open, but singing sound – a 'personal favourite' Drury says, which comes into its own in today's pieces by Widor and Jongen.

This year the Grand Organ celebrates its 30th anniversary. Read more about its construction and see the full specifications in the Sydney Opera House information sheet (pdf file) at <http://tiny.cc/SOHGrandOrgan>



David Drury organ

David Drury was born in 1961 and educated at Trinity Grammar School, Sydney. In 1984 he graduated from the Sydney Conservatorium with a degree in organ performance and as the recipient of the Vasanta scholarship for overseas study. In England he studied with the professor of organ of the Royal Academy of Music, David Sanger, and gained the Associate Diploma in organ, and the Choir-Master Diploma from the Royal College of Organists. In 1987 he became the first and only Australian to win the Tournemire prize for improvisation at the St Alban's International Organ Competition. He has given recitals in Westminster Abbey, St Paul's and Westminster Cathedrals in London, and King's College Cambridge. In Paris, he has performed four times at Notre Dame and twice at La Madeleine, and he has also appeared at the Toulon Festival.

He has toured North America as a recitalist, tutor, accompanist and choral director, and has given masterclasses and performed on America radio and television. In 1996 he gave a recital for the Organ Historical Society's National convention in Philadelphia.

David Drury has appeared at the Sydney Opera House and the Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Hobart Town Halls. He has performed at the Melbourne International Festival of Organ and Harpsichord, the Newcastle Festival, the Barossa Festival and the Festival of Sydney. He broadcasts regularly for the ABC and other radio stations.

He has performed concertos with the Adelaide and West Australian symphony orchestras, the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra and Orchestra Victoria. He also plays with the Sydney Symphony when organ is required; has performed with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Seymour Group, Song Company, Sydney Brass Ensemble, Sydney University Musical Society and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs; and is the organist/continuo player with the Australian Baroque Brass. He performed in the 2000 Olympic Games opening ceremony and in front of the world leaders at the 2007 APEC concert at the Sydney Opera House.

David Drury has released four solo recordings as well as appearing on numerous recordings with the Sydney Symphony, The Song Company and Cantillation. He is also the keyboard player with the emerging progressive band Resonaxis. As a composer, David Drury has a large output of choral music. He is Director of Music at St Paul's College, within the University of Sydney.



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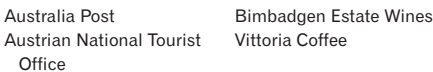
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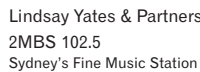
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