

Renée Anne Louprette, *organ*

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Wellesley
Friday, June 27, 2014, 10:15 & 11:45 a.m.

Marche américaine from **Feuillets d'Album** Op. 31 (1877)
trans. Marcel Dupré (1886–1971)

Charles-Marie Widor
(1844–1937)

Fugue sur le theme du Carillon des Heures de la cathédrale de Soissons, Op. 12 (1962)

Maurice Duruflé
(1902–1986)

Faneuil Hall (2013)

Elegy: The Cradle of Liberty
Fugue: Liberty and Union Now and Forever

Pamela Decker
(b. 1955)

First performance, commissioned by the AGO 2014 National Convention in Boston

Récit de tierce en taille from **Livre d'orgue** (1699)

Nicolas de Grigny
(c. 1672–1703)

From **Premier livre d'orgue: Douze pièces** (1938)

Une prière votive: *Comme un choral*
Les chérubims du paradis: *Clair, heureux*
Antienne en musette: *Allant*
La Rosace: *Allant, brillant, éclatant*

George Elbert Migot
(1891–1976)

Trio à trois mains

arr. Marie-Agnès Grall-Menet (b. 1954)

Claude-Bénigne Balbastre
(1724–1799)

Final, Op. 21 from **Six Pièces** (1868)

César Franck
(1822–1890)

Organ prepared by Juget-Sinclair.

Program Sponsors

Juget-Sinclair, *supporter-in-part*

Program Notes

This program highlights the tonal colors and brilliance of the Juget-Sinclair organ, Op. 24 (2005), within the intimate space of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. We begin with the magisterial *Marche américaine* by Charles-Marie Widor, undoubtedly a tip of the hat to the American military and patriotic march style perfected by John Philip Sousa. The work comes from a collection of twelve piano pieces by Widor entitled *Feuillets d'Album (Album Leaves)*, Op. 31, reminiscent of Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words*. Marcel Dupré, in his transcription for organ, adds a four-bar fanfare before the content of the piano version begins. In Widor's piano score, the left hand plays the principal theme in A minor in octaves in the bass; in Dupré's arrangement, the theme is introduced in the pedal.

Fugue sur le thème du Carillon des Heures de la cathédrale de Soissons, by Maurice Duruflé, serves as a sonic transition between the romanticism of Widor and the impressionistic, *flamenco*-influenced language of Pamela Decker's *Faneuil Hall* that follows. Published in 1962, this is one of the last of Duruflé's solo organ works. Based upon the eight-note carillon theme of the Cathedral of Soissons in Picardy, which can still be heard today, Duruflé's fugue both adheres to the rules of counterpoint and evokes dramatic brilliance with a well-paced crescendo from the beginning of the piece until its climactic ending.

In September 2013, *The American Organist* published the following notes by Pamela Decker, detailing the inspiration for, and musical structure of, her newly composed piece, *Faneuil Hall*, commissioned for the occasion of this convention:

The piece pays tribute to the city of Boston through a musical portrait of the landmark that has housed pivotal meetings and events in the history of the United States. Faneuil Hall was built in 1742 as a market house that offered a meeting hall on its upper level. A subsequent restoration added a third story. The hall has been referred to as the "Cradle of Liberty," in connection with its status as the location of citizens' meetings and government actions that advanced the cause of liberty.

Having spent time with the composer in Tucson, I came to appreciate the Spanish influences on the art and culture of the desert Southwest. These are prevalent in much of Decker's music and bring a sweet melancholy to the *berceuse* theme of the opening movement, "Elegy: The Cradle of Liberty." Sensitive to the tonal colors of the Juget-Sinclair organ, Decker skillfully combines South American and *flamenco* influences with elements of French Impressionism. The theme of the "Liberty and Union" fugue is based upon a musical spelling of "Faneuil Hall."

One of the most sublime works in the organ repertoire, the *Récit de tierce en taille* by Nicolas de Grigny, presents the first of two interjections from the French Baroque period within the program. Born in Reims, de Grigny spent most of his working life there, with the exception of a short tenure at the Abbey Church of St. Denis in Paris, from 1693 to 1695, during which time he studied with Nicolas Lebègue, one of the organists of the Royal Chapel. The *Récit de tierce en taille* comes from the mass setting in the single volume of organ music de Grigny left us in his brief life of thirty-one years. So revered was this collection, representing the pinnacle of style and compositional technique from the period, that Johann Sebastian Bach copied it out when studying French keyboard music in Weimar. One of the most exquisite examples of the *Récit de tierce*—in this case, for the left hand in the tenor range (*en taille*)—de Grigny's *Récit* continues to enchant with its elegance of ornamentation, sweep of movement, and handling of dissonance to highly expressive effect.

Georges Elbert Migot was a Parisian composer, poet, and visual artist. He studied composition with Charles-Marie Widor, orchestration with Vincent d'Indy, and organ with Eugène Gigout and Alexandre Guilmant at the Paris Conservatoire. Migot was a prolific composer of chamber music, orchestral works, opera, and ballet. Fascinated by early music, he wrote a book on Jean-Philippe Rameau and composed numerous works based upon early forms. In 1948, he was appointed *Conservateur du Musée des instruments anciens du Conservatoire de Paris*. His *Premier livre d'orgue: Douze pièces* includes several colorful movements. His writing for the organ reveals a charm and nostalgia I have enjoyed discovering through these miniature *tableaux*.

The penultimate piece on the program is a minuet by Claude-Bénigne Balbastre, *Trio à trois mains*. Balbastre (also spelled Balbâtre) was a native of Dijon who achieved great fame as organist and composer during his lifetime. While *titulaire* at the Parisian church of St. Roch, crowds of people would come to hear him play his *Noëls* at Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, which irritated the Archbishop of Paris to such degree that he forbade Balbastre from playing the Mass in 1762. The Trio in B-flat major is found within a manuscript from 1749, entitled *Livre contenant des pièces de différent genre d'orgue et de clavecin*, also known as the Versailles manuscript. French organist Marie-Agnès Grall-Menet has

created an arrangement of the piece that may be played by one organist, with the “third hand” covered by flute stops in the pedal.

Final, Op. 21, is the last piece in the collection *Six Pièces* by César Franck. This valiant work is dedicated to Franck’s friend and colleague Louis-J.-A. Lefébure-Wély. Both Franck and Lefébure-Wély participated in the dedication of the Cavaillé-Coll organ at the Church of St. Clotilde in Paris, on December 19, 1859. It was at this performance that Franck may have first improvised or performed the *Final* on the instrument he would preside over until the end of his life, in 1890. This substantial piece exploits virtuosic pedal technique—something for which Lefébure-Wély, rather than Franck, was widely recognized—and exhibits a *joie de vivre*, as well as a dignity and elegance in the juxtaposition of the playful, outgoing first theme and the poetically lyrical second theme.

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