

Heinrich Christensen, *organ*
Gabriela Diaz, *violin*
Gabriel Boyers, *violin*
Noriko Herndon, *viola*
Rafael Popper-Keizer, *cello*

King's Chapel, Boston
Wednesday, June 25 & Thursday, June 26, 2014, 4:00 p.m.

Sonata No. 1 for Organ and Strings (1943)

Daniel Pinkham
(1923–2006)

Apparitions, for Organ and String Quartet (2013)

Robert Sirota
(b. 1949)

My Shepherd will supply my need
Jesus calls us
Come, thou fount of every blessing
What wondrous love is this

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

Cappriccio, for Violin and Organ (2006)

Naji Hakim
(b. 1955)

Commissioned by ChicAGO 2006 National Convention

Winter Fantasia, for Cello and Organ (2012)

Lisa Bielawa
(b. 1968)

Organ Quintet No. 3 in G Major

Padre Antonio Soler
(1729–1783)

Allegretto
Largo
Allegro Pastorile
Andantino grazioso
Allegro subito

Organ prepared by C.B. Fisk, Inc.

Program Sponsors

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Program Notes

Daniel Pinkham was the music director of King's Chapel from 1958 to 2000, and was instrumental in securing the Fisk organ, inaugurated in 1964 (Happy 50th, Opus 44!). His Sonata No. 1 is a one-movement work, composed in 1943, and premiered by his mentor, E. Power Biggs, in 1944.

Robert Sirota writes of his *Apparitions*, for Organ and String Quartet:

American hymnody has played a significant role in my organ writing for some time. The last organ piece I wrote was for the historic Appleton organ, an 1830 instrument housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It's a rather ghostly instrument, so I imagined that three early American hymns (*Helmsley*, *Semley*, and "From Greenland's Icy Mountains") had been played on the Appleton so many times that the organ was able to play them by itself, and I went from there. The title of that piece is *Holy Ghosts*. I was still turning that idea over in my mind when I learned that the 2014 AGO commission would be performed in King's Chapel, practically the epicenter of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century New England hymnody.

Apparitions emerged as paraphrases on four tunes—not so much variations as jumping-off points for something more flexible and fantastic. I have employed two Southern Harmony tunes: "Jesus Calls Us" (*Restoration*) and "Wondrous Love"; and two Northern tunes: "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" (*Resignation*) and "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (*Nettleton*). I am in awe of the spiritual and emotional range of these great melodies: the stark simplicity of *Resignation*, the primal power of *Restoration*, the passionate joy of *Nettleton*, and particularly the fierce piety of "Wondrous Love."

Naji Hakim's *Capriccio* was written for the AGO 2006 National Convention in Chicago. It is a sprightly romp with influences from ragtime to tango, Gershwin to Piazzolla. The composer describes it thus: "*Capriccio* for violin and organ develops a lively and dancing theme in an abridged sonata form. The exposition opens out through developing thematic derivations of a same joyful theme on the violin. A contrasting sensual second theme with soft percussive accompaniment on the organ leads to a varied recapitulation of both ideas before the brilliant coda."

Winter Fantasia was commissioned by the King's Chapel Concert Series for Rafael Popper-Keizer and Heinrich Christensen in 2012. In the context of this program, it is our sincere hope that it might compensate for the lack of air conditioning in the church. For the premiere, Lisa Bielawa provided these program notes:

Written expressly for the Fisk organ at King's Chapel in Boston, but composed primarily on a "sister" Fisk instrument housed at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in chilly January, this Fantasy celebrates cellist Rafael Popper-Keizer's passionate yet intimate tone. I find it fascinating to pair these two instruments—each capable of amazing sonic and expressive effects that are completely outside the vocabulary of the other. Sometimes this contrast is most palpable because the instruments are doing such different things, and other times because they are doing similar things. I am grateful to my mother, organist Sandra Soderlund, whose guide to the pipe organ for composers (dedicated to my brother and me) was invaluable, and whose advice and camaraderie made the whole process richer.

It seems fitting to wrap up this program with Soler's Quintet, coming full circle to Pinkham and Biggs, who famously recorded Soler's double-organ concerti on the Flentrop organ and a chamber organ in Adolphus Busch Hall at Harvard University. This delightful music is much too rarely heard today.

– Heinrich Christensen