

PsalmFest!

Organ improvisation featuring metrical Psalmody and robust singing

Bruce Neswick & Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra, *organ improvisateurs*

Old South Church, Boston

Friday, June 27, 2014, 2:30 p.m.

From their inception, Psalms were sung.

Psalms express the gamut of human experience.

Psalms dress in diverse costumes around the world through each era.

For these reasons, we chose to feature Psalms in this PsalmFest:

Organ improvisation featuring metrical Psalmody and robust singing.

In the first half of the program, we explore Psalms that speak of God's guidance through the ages, culminating with musical instruments and "Hallelujahs" in the Jewish folksong setting of Psalm 150.

In the second half of the program, we begin with Psalm responses to the Exodus, enter the paradox of praise and despair in the world, and paint vivid pictures of creation.

We conclude by remembering lifetimes of music sounding, honoring how our music-making leads us to "that new world we glimpse through song."

"Neumark" Dances: Chorale Prelude on "Wer nur den lieben Gott" (2013)

Lisa Bielawa

(b. 1968)

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

Psalm 55: If thou but trust in God to guide thee

NEUMARK

An old favorite, creatively led by Bruce Neswick

Psalm 90: Eternal Father, God of grace

MORTON STREET

Fresh tune and harmonies composed by young Korean composer Texu Kim (b. 1980)

Psalm 150: Hal'luhu, hal'luhu

HAL'LUHU

A traditional Jewish folksong

Psalm 114: Let My People Go

Traditional spiritual

An African-American spiritual, combined with Sprechstimme, denouncing injustices that continue to plague us, such as racism, child abuse, sexism, and homophobia

Tocatta in G Minor, Op. 6

Marianne Ploger

Commissioned by David Arcus, Ploger's brilliant toccata paints the Psalm-114 depiction of the Israelites rushing into the Red Sea, chased by Egyptian captors

(b. 1953)

Psalms 9–10: Give thanks to the Lord with your whole heart

ETHIOPIAN MODE II

A new setting, inspired by sixth-century Ethiopian Orthodox Church chants

Psalm 65: Praise is your right, O God in Zion

GENEVAN 65

The timeless nature of the Genevan Psalter beckons cavernous breaths and roof-raising singing

For Remembered Music Sounding

TRENNEY

Tom Troeger's profound text with Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra's vibrant setting sends us off celebrating how music lifts our spirits, creating "that new world we glimpse through song"

Organ prepared by Jonathan Ambrosino.