

Suggestions for Performance

The 10 compositions gathered into this collection were composed for a pipe organ equipped with pedals and multiple manuals in mind but are entirely playable on a one manual organ without pedals, an electronic keyboard, or a reed organ (harmonium). They have also been arranged for piano solo and have been published separately in that format. The pieces in this first collection do not have a pedal part, are pitched at various level of proficiency, and call for legato technique punctuated with other types of touch where indicated in the score or when deemed appropriate by the performer. While these would make for effective recital and lesson material, a place can be found for each of them somewhere in the worship service throughout the liturgical year where they might serve as preludes, offertories, postludes, or for dedication.

In performing these works it will be incumbent upon the performer to make mental adjustments to the score, if necessary, so the music makes it for the listener. The piano solo versions have been edited with damper pedal indications which may be further embellished with additional pedaling to suit the player. As with any organ music some experimentation can be expected in order to bring out best what's written on the page. In very wet acoustics the organist will need to play a little slower and more detached to keep things clear. In dry acoustics the rests between detached chords may need to be shortened more and the chords held longer than their written values. The fundamental pulse is to be retained, but variations in tempo can and should be introduced at appropriate places to nuance the music and keep it from sounding mechanical. These places have been marked in the scores.

Tempo marks corresponding to beats per minute also have been included, with the crotchet (quarter note) receiving one beat and descriptive terms written in the universal musical language of Italian. These are relative only and should be understood as broad approximations to be used as a guide which, like all tempo marks, may not be appropriate in every circumstance due to the personal interpretations of performers, the way the instrument at

hand responds, and especially, the way its sound lingers in its own acoustical environment. The feeling aroused by the harmonic structure of the music will be the true source of correct tempo in any given situation, thus performers are apt to find their tempo mark in the composition itself rather than in the instructions at the beginning.

Markings for tempi appear as follows:

Quarter note = 142-150 -- Allegro molto
120-141 -- Allegro
100-119 -- Allegretto
80- 99 -- Moderato
60- 79 -- Andante
42- 59 -- Adagio
30- 41 -- Lento

The 4 part writing found in these 10 pieces is in standard short score (2 staff) notated with treble and bass clefs. Voice lines in these pieces are never permitted to cross. Save for Op. 2, a work written entirely in keyboard style, voice ranges are never exceeded. These 10 works stay within the following voice ranges: line

Top (treble) staff:

Soprano voice -- (middle) C to high A (1st above staff)

Alto voice – (tenor) G to D (4th line)

Bottom (bass) staff:

Tenor voice – (tenor) C to (middle) G

Bass – (low) C to (middle) E

In these works the compass of the bass voice is extended downward to low C.

In this music the stretch for the hands is kept at an octave or less. Registration suggestions along with indications for hand division are included with the scores. The choices of stops and couplers will depend upon personal taste and require more or less adjustment depending upon the resources of the instrument at hand. Light suboctave (16-foot) manual stops with good blending qualities, if available, may be drawn with advantage and included with the choruses to provide gravity. If the instrument is provided with an Automatic Pedal (Pedal to Great) coupler, this might also be employed sparingly with good effect. If this coupler is not available and more gravity is desired for certain passages then certain notes in the bass could be assigned to

the pedals. If still more gravity is needed the bottom line could be taken on the pedals throughout, with the remaining notes divided between the hands.

The early Op. 1 Sketches in F Major and Bb Major are short, easy works each based upon a free theme for improvisation supplied, among many others, by Louis Vierne to his pupils. Both pieces are identical in form, being made up of 3 phrases in the major key separated by 2 intervening periods in the minor key. Both are written in 4 voice texture, and both end in 6 voices. In both works the phrases harmonized in the major key are twice interrupted by contrasting periods where the melody lines are taken from one of the middle voices of the previous phrase. These 2 works are a matched pair which function best as short musical interludes in the service. Their spicy harmony and identical architecture may be effectively emphasized using soft 8-foot foundations stops for the phrases in the major key and switching to a Flute stop for the interrupting periods in the minor key and the String Celeste reserved for the final phrase and codetta.

The D Major Op. 2 Recessional treats a rousing hymn-like theme in 4 voice texture in “keyboard style” without observing voice range limits and incorporates many of the same compositional devices as its companion piece, the Eb Major Op. 3 Processional March. Written without observing voice range limits, this work has a middle section which presents a 2-part canon at the octave based upon the first few notes of the theme. It also employs a fugato leading to the return of the theme which is then harmonized using chromatic planing. This work finishes with great finality in 7 voices over the full power of the instrument and provides a very strong, pervading bass with suboctave (16-foot) stops drawn. With the proper manual stops drawn the listener would never miss the instrument’s powerful Pedal division, as the score does not require it. It would be difficult to find another organ postlude for 2 hands only in simple triple time which runs under 3 minutes in length that is this memorable and effective.

The Eb Major Op. 3 Processional March, as its name implies, is a majestic march with another rousing theme. This work written in 4 parts employs a pair of 2-part canons at the octave based upon the 1st phrase of the theme, a section which inverts the theme and shares it between voices, a fugato based upon rhythmic transformation (same pitches in succession, different note values) of the theme, chromatic harmonies and planing, a

dominant pedal point, and ends with a spirited flourish in 7 voices over the full power of the instrument. This is a companion piece to the previous one, uses many of the same compositional tools, and passes through 3 related keys and 3 unrelated keys before returning finally to the home key. This work also finishes with great finality. It would be difficult to find another equally useful contrapuntally worked march of this length for 2 hands which passes through as many keys.

The C Major Op. 4 Variations on a cantus firmus is a big piece which, considering the dedicatee, consists not surprisingly of a baker's dozen (13) variations on a cantus firmus (c.f., fixed melody) preceded by a related fanfare-like introduction. The work is non-modulating through the first 10 variations, and the first 3 notes of the c.f. happen to match the theme from Louis Vierne's improvisation reconstructed by Maurice Durufle which has been entitled "Marche Episcopale." The c.f. also has a characteristic upward leap of a major 6th in its melodic outline. This composition is non-modulating through the first 10 of its variations, the first 2 of which are 2-part canons at the octave which take turns switching out the follower and leader in 4 voice texture. Seven more rhythmic variations follow, the 5th and 6th of which have the c.f. dissolving into figuration. During these 7 variations the texture thins down to 3 voices, then 2 voices, and returns again to 3 and 4 voices. The 10th variation thins again to 3 voices and presents another 2-part canon at the octave, only this time the c.f. and its inverse are the follower and leader, respectively. After this tricky procedure the 11th variation continues in 3 voices and presents the c.f. in inverse movement in the right hand against a series of running notes in the left hand. Here the c.f. is found separated into 2 halves harmonically with the 1st half in the home key and the 2nd half in the parallel minor. The 12th variation, a 4 voice fugato which introduces a companion subject, reintroduces the home key and treats 3 countersubjects in quadruple counterpoint, the 1st countersubject being the inverted c.f. Following a conventional exposition in the tonic/dominant, the music proceeds through a redundant (5th) entry, then 2 additional entries in the home key before modulating to an entry in the subdominant key (F Major). It then comes to a complete stop on a big Neapolitan 6th chord. The final (13th) variation harmonizes the c.f. in 4 voices using chromatic planing in the parallel key of c minor. The coda, regaining energy with a return to the subdominant key of F Major, reiterates not the c.f. as expected but the companion subject in imitation over the full power of the organ. The piece

ends with a sudden turn to the home key and repeated, crushing C Major chords in 7 voices under an inverted pedal point, exploiting to the fullest the downward sonorities of the instrument. This work has much to offer both the listener and performer and is a real opportunity for organists to display their executive abilities and imagination with the color possibilities of the stops at hand. It would be handy to have a larger work like this in the playable repertoire, especially when performing on a fine, one manual pipe organ.

The Bb Major Op. 5 Prelude Internationale proceeds at a moderately quick tempo and is constructed in the manner of an improvisation in 6-part form on a single free theme (the same method favored and promoted by Louis Vierne), only compressed (shortened). The theme for this work derives from rhythmic transformation of the main theme from Op. 4 and inverting the major 6th upward leap in its melodic outline to a downward minor 3rd. This piece could serve as a quiet postlude as well as an effective prelude using light foundation stops with String Celeste tone reserved for the final entry of the theme. The 6 different sections of the piece, particularly the development, repay careful study, as does the manner in which the triplet rhythm within a steady duple time alternates between the hands. The ending in 5 voices, with its 2-part canon at the octave and chromatically inflected penultimate chord, is reminiscent of Vierne.

The D Major Op. 6 Fugue a la gigue is a brisk, exuberant, rhythmic 4 voice dance fugue whose subject is also derived by rhythmic transformation of the main theme of Op. 4. The subject begins on scale degree 1 and is supplied with a real answer in the dominant. It retains that same characteristic upward leap of a major 6th in its melodic outline and is therefore a bit tricky to accommodate in 4 voices for 2 hands only. This subject is therefore tweaked in different places to squeeze all the moving lines into the available vertical space. How this tweaking was done repays careful study. This music proceeds at a quick pace, requires a full sound, ends in 6 voices, and is fun to play and listen to. It would be very appropriate as a postlude on a joyous feast day. "Jig" dance fugues like this also make good recital encores and tend to have great audience appeal.

The G Major Op. 7 Voluntary is another 4 voice work inspired by familiar models of the same name left to us by the old English masters and makes use of fugal procedure. It consists of a slow, brief introduction ending

on a half cadence followed by a short fugue having a rhythmic subject and 2 countersubjects which undergo rapid development with almost no episodic material. The subject of the fugue derives from rhythmic transformation of the tenor line from Op. 8. It begins on scale degree 1 and is provided with a real answer in the dominant. A passage where the subject is combined with 3 free counterpoints appears in the middle of the fugue, both countersubjects return to combine with the subject in triple counterpoint for the final entry, and a short coda ending in 6 voices rounds out the piece. This piece is specially fashioned in historical style and particularly well suited for the conclusion of a worship service when the organist needs a short postlude to begin quietly and end rhythmically with a big sound when it isn't necessary to play a long time.

The G Major Op. 8 Diapason Movement takes its name from many similar works by the old English masters and is scored for light 8-foot Principal tone with the Unda Maris possibly added. Written in 4 voices throughout, it incorporates a 2-part canon at the octave built upon the tenor line of the harmony. This is a thin textured, very subdued, and peaceful work, easy to read and easy to play, instructive for pianists who are moving to the organ, yet useful in the worship service. It is well suited as a short prelude for general use any day of the liturgical year and may also serve as a shorter offertory when needed.

The d minor Op. 9 Chorale which concludes this collection was also employed as the central slow movement of the Op. 10 Praeludium, Chorale, & Fugue Op. 10 in the same key which opens the 2nd collection. It was written first and published separately to preserve its autonomy while at the same time allow it to exist inside another work, further honoring the dedicatee whose habit it often was to repackage his own previously composed music in a new work. It is constructed in a rondo (ABABA) form and makes use of 2 themes, the 1st of which is introduced as an unaccompanied bass solo, then in the soprano harmonized in 3 voice texture. The entire work to which this Chorale belongs is built around a 9 note figure based upon the 1st 6 notes of the d minor scale, and this same melodic curve is reflected in the Chorale's 1st theme. A 2nd theme is then introduced in the soprano, still in 3 voices, after which the 1st theme reenters as a 2-part canon at the octave between the outer voices in 4 voice texture. This is followed by a passage in 4 voices where the 2nd theme reenters in the soprano. Here the tempo increases gradually, the

music becomes more agitated, then falls off gradually to a single, very slow line before the 2nd theme completely finishes. The music resumes in the parallel major key during which the 2 themes are combined in 5 voices using a Celeste stop. The piece then closes very quietly. Owing to the fact that many instruments are built with the downward range of Celeste ranks ending at tenor C, the parts for the left hand in this passage stay within this limit. When this Chorale is being performed by itself one would not play the ensuing 4 voice bridge section which leads to the ensuing Op. 10 Fugue (further particulars about this bridge section may be found in the notes to the 2nd collection). Performers will find this to be an effective stand alone piece having a variety of uses.

Individual scores from this collection may be previewed, played back, and digital downloads may be obtained by going to either of these links:

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