

A GENEALOGICAL ORGAN RECITAL

James Welch Traces His Tutorial Lineage

BYU-Idaho

Tuesday, January 23, 2024 • Ruth H. Barrus Concert Hall

Prelude and Fugue in F# minor	Dietrich Buxtehude 1637-1707
Toccata in C Major, BWV 564	Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750
Fantasia in A minor	Johann Christian Kittel 1732-1809
Prelude in C Major	Johann Christian Rinck 1770-1846
Andantino in A minor	Adolf Hesse 1808-1863
Fanfare	Jacques Lemmens 1823-1881
Kyrie, from <i>Messe Solennelle</i> Arr. Alexander Schreiner	Louis Vierne 1870-1937
<i>Chant de paix</i> (Song of Peace)	Jean Langlais 1907-1991
Hunting Horn Scherzo Edited by Darwin Wolford (1936-2023)	Alexander Schreiner 1901-1987
Adagio molto espressivo From Sonata in E minor	Herbert Nanney 1918-1996
'Tis Sweet to Sing the Matchless Love	Arr. James Welch b. 1950
Allegro, from Symphony No. 6	Charles-Marie Widor 1844-1937



Every musician owes a great debt to the masters who have helped to train, discipline, and inspire them. I have had the good fortune of studying with many fine piano and organ teachers from my earliest years. (I also give great credit to my parents who provided consistent support through the years.) Some years ago, I gave one of my students the assignment to trace her musical lineage back to Bach (and therefore my lineage as well). The result revealed an unbroken succession of major figures who were both teachers and composers. This evening's program will demonstrate a development of styles, from baroque to contemporary, and nationalities (German, French, Belgian, and American). I included Buxtehude in the lineage--after all, Bach also had teachers and mentors, too.

Dietrich Buxtehude - Johann Sebastian Bach - Johann Christian Kittel - Johann Christian Rinck - Adolph Hesse - Jacques Lemmens - Charles-Marie Widor - Louis Vierne - Alexander Schreiner - Herbert Nanney - James Welch

I also like to compare this musical lineage to my priesthood line of authority:

James Welch - John S. Welch - Leon C. Bowman - Joseph E. Young - Stephen L. Richards - Joseph Fielding Smith - Brigham Young - The Three Witnesses (Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris) - Joseph Smith Jr. - Peter, James, and John - Jesus Christ.

Dietrich Buxtehude's fame is largely due to his connection with J. S. Bach; the story about Bach's walking 300 miles from Arnstadt to Lübeck in 1705 to hear Buxtehude's *Abendmusiken* (evening music) concerts is well documented. However, Buxtehude was an extremely important composer and organist in his own right and exerted a tremendous influence on all organ composition in North Germany in his day. Buxtehude composed numerous cantatas, arias, and other vocal works with instruments, as well as chamber and organ music. The Prelude and Fugue in F# minor is typical of the toccata style of the North German school, with many alternations of fantasia sections with contrapuntal passages. Within the prelude alone there are a half dozen different textures presented, each varying in dynamic intensity and tempo. The catchy fugue is followed by a highly improvisatory movement. Keep in mind that organs in that period were tuned in meantone or other tuning systems, and certain chords in the key of F# minor would have sounded very out of tune to our ears.

J. S. Bach needs no historical introduction. However, I would like to say that after years of studying and performing his music, I had the opportunity in 1985 (for Bach's 300th birthday) to travel to what was then East Germany, where I visited Eisenach, Ohrdruf, Arnstadt, Weimar, Köthen, Leipzig, and other places associated with Bach's life, playing a number of the Silbermann organs that he is known to have played. This was indeed an artistic and spiritual high point in my life. It is difficult to comprehend Bach's musical genius and religious devotion, and his life stands as an example to every musician.

Johann Christian Kittel studied with Johann Sebastian Bach from 1748 to 1750. In his position as organist in Erfurt, he gathered a large number of pupils to whom he passed on the techniques of Johann Sebastian Bach's compositional and performance style. In addition to a cantata, he also wrote piano and organ works, and an organ method. This Fantasia is typical of the mid-18th century "Empfindsam" style, which features a homophonic texture with liberal use of appoggiaturas, dynamic changes, and extensive chromaticism.

Johann Christian Rinck studied with Kittel in Erfurt from 1786 to 1789. In 1790 he assumed the position of municipal organist in Giessen, where he became university music director in 1805. In his position as a teacher, he transmitted the Bach tradition to the organists of the 19th century. This prelude shows Rinck to be a "servant of the lighter muse, to create as pleasant a contrast as possible to the seriousness of life for him as well as for others."

Adolf Hesse, the son of an organ builder, was the pupil of Hummel, Rinck, and Spohr. He served as organist in Breslau, Germany, and also gave organ recitals in London and Paris. He produced a large output of compositions in many styles. He studied with Rinck in 1828-1829.

Jacques Lemmens, a Belgian organist, was a pupil of Hesse and Fétis. He taught organ at the Brussels Conservatory, where he introduced Bach and German composers of the 17th century to organists of his time. His pupils included Widor, Guilmant, and Maillay. In addition to an important organ method, his works include a variety of compositions, but this short Fanfare is certainly the best known of his organ works.

Louis Vierne, the virtually blind organist, was a pupil of Franck, Widor, and Marty. He became assistant to Widor at St. Sulpice and was assistant to both Widor and Guilmant at the Paris Conservatory. He served as organist of Notre Dame Cathedral from 1900-1937, where he died at the console. His six symphonies form an essential part of the organ literature. I studied Vierne's music with Alexander Schreiner, and I enjoyed hearing Schreiner reminisce about his studies with Vierne. This Kyrie is the opening movement to Vierne's *Solemn Mass*, written in 1899 for choir and two organs which alternated louder and quieter passages.

Jean Langlais, another blind Parisian organist, was a pupil of Dupré, Dukas, and Marchal. He succeeded Tournemire at Ste. Clotilde and was thus the heir to the tradition of Franck, Pierné, and Bonnal as well. I travelled to Paris several times to study with Langlais while I was a student in Salzburg, Austria. It was a great revelation to study the works of Franck, Vierne, and Langlais at the great organ of Ste. Clotilde. Langlais' highly improvisatory style is colorful, modal, and often dissonant.

Alexander Schreiner served as organist of the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City for a remarkable 53 years, retiring in 1977. Born in Germany, he came to Salt Lake City with his family as a young boy, showing great promise as a musician. He studied with McClellan, was a theatre organist in Salt Lake City and Los Angeles, and taught at UCLA. In 1925 he studied in Paris with Widor and Vierne. In his fascinating book of memoirs *Alexander Schreiner Reminiscences*, he writes, "With Vierne I played Bach at every lesson as well as the music of Vierne himself, after which I did improvisations. Each week he brought to my lesson two themes. One was a fugal theme, and the other was used to improvise an Andante in sonata form. I had to provide, on the spur of the moment, an additional theme in a related key for the Andante." Schreiner was well known for his creative improvisations over the air on the CBS broadcast "Music and the Spoken Word." Schreiner also played the organ for silent movies in the 1920's in Los Angeles and Salt Lake City. This light-hearted scherzo is more typical of the theater organ style at which he excelled.

Herbert Nanney was my organ professor at Stanford University. A native Californian (he and I were both born in Whittier), he studied with Alexander McCurdy at Curtis and with Alexander Schreiner. He also studied with André Marchal (yet another blind organist) in Paris following WWII. After returning to the States, Nanney joined the faculty at Stanford in 1948, remaining there until his retirement in 1985. An exceptional teacher, he influenced many students who are active today throughout the country. The "Adagio" was written as part of a three-movement sonata in 1939 while he was a composition student at Whittier College. He was inspired in this movement by the music of Franck, Vierne, and Debussy.

Charles Widor, born in Lyon, studied with Lemmens and Fétis. He served as organist of St. Sulpice in Paris for 64 years (!), and taught organ at the Paris Conservatory, where he succeeded César Franck. He wrote 10 symphonies for organ but also wrote many orchestral and vocal works. Alexander Schreiner studied with Widor in Paris in the mid-1920's, and I have in my files a photo of the two of them taken in Paris. I had lessons with Alexander Schreiner on several occasions, in which I asked him about his experiences in Paris with Widor.

About the Performer...

James Welch received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ performance from Stanford University, with further studies in France and Austria. He has concertized internationally, with performances in such prestigious venues as Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, the Leipzig Gewandhaus, National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City. He has also performed and taught in Beijing, Taipei, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Jerusalem. A specialist in Latin American organ music, he received a Fulbright award to perform and conduct research in Brazil; since then he has performed in Mexico and edited three volumes of organ music by Mexican composers. The author of two biographies of prominent California organists, *Dale Wood: The Man and the Music*, and *Richard Purvis, Organist of Grace*, he has performed at conventions of the American Guild of Organists and at the International Congress of Organists; his articles have appeared in *The American Organist* and *The Diapason*; and he has released numerous CDs, recorded on a variety of organs. He taught on the music faculties of the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Santa Clara University.

As a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he has served as ward organist and stake music chairman. He is the composer of a hymn in the Church's hymnal ("Bless Our Fast, We Pray"). He performs regularly as a guest recitalist at the Tabernacle at Temple Square in Salt Lake City, and he has taught at the Church Music Workshop held at Brigham Young University. He served a mission in Brazil and has returned several times for concerts and master classes. He and his wife Deanne are the parents of two sons, Nicholas and Jameson. The Welch's live in Provo, Utah, where Dr. Welch continues his concert and teaching work.

Tutorial Lineage

