

easy, even though it is made up of easy elements. In fact, any student should be over-conscientious about mapping out the fingering for all of these simple elements, and also should practice all of the parts amply: short sections, one hand at a time, until each hand for each section has become second nature. Only then should the hands be put together. This is in principle exactly the same as with any other piece.

Pedal part

The pedal part, unlike the hands, does provide the opportunity to make choices that will vary among different players. The opening pedal theme (Example 4) can be played with alternate toes and come out as legato as the player might wish. This way of playing it feels quite natural. Furthermore, there are no indications for use of the swell pedal or other non-note-playing uses of the feet during the passages in which the pedal plays this theme. However, there are also a number of different heel-and-toe-based pedalings that could also make sense. Given the time and place of the creation of this piece, any of the above could represent the composer's assumptions about how it might be played. Since it is important that this theme be played easily with spontaneity, it is key that the student feel comfortable with the chosen pedaling.

During the middle measures of the piece, the pedal line is often a harmonically based quarter-note bass line. Again, the pedaling can be worked out a number of different ways, none of them particularly complicated. For example, in mm. 29 and 31 the third-beat quarter note can be played with right heel or left toe, consistent with its being legato. Or the choice could be made to play the quarter notes detached, in which case all of the quarter notes could be played with the right toe.

Measures 73–75 are a particularly interesting case. Clearly, the higher notes will all be played with the right foot and the lower notes with the left. The choice as to whether to get the heels involved will be based on personal preference and also on the intended articulation. These notes have no articulation marked. The overall sound and texture at this point in the piece is loud and energetic. Are these notes an energetic driving bass, or a kind of *quasi misterioso* chromatic near-trill? Or something else? Choices about articulation here will possibly depend in part on acoustics. This is a good place for a student to try different things and listen carefully to different effects.

Near the end of the piece, the opening pedal theme comes back in octaves. (This starts in m. 85.) Needless to say, by physical necessity, the left foot will play the lower octave and the right foot will play the upper. And again, choices about toe and heel will be made based on both personal preference about technique and decisions about articulation. If the student has conceived the theme as legato from the beginning, then it perhaps makes sense to play it legato here. However, the fact that the texture here is very loud and emphatic might suggest a somewhat more emphatic articulation. On the other hand, the composer has altered the upper line, changing it from sixteenth notes to quarter notes (Example 6). What does

Example 6



this suggest about the pedal articulation? This is another place where it would be interesting for a student to try different things and listen carefully.

Pedals in octaves

There are two things to mention about practicing a pedal part that is in octaves. The first is that, all else being equal, it

is easier both to learn the part and to execute it in performance if the toe and heel choices are the same for both feet. This is certainly not absolutely necessary, but it will happen naturally here, since the black note/white note patterns largely determine the heel placement. The second thing—more crucial—is that practicing the feet separately is useful and important. Doing enough of that will make everything about putting all of the parts together easier and more secure. The protocol for practicing a passage like this should include practicing each foot separately with each (separate) hand, as well as the feet as a unit with each hand. Probably practicing each foot separately with the left hand is the most important component of practicing the passage.

Crescendo marking

The composer has, rather considerably, limited *crescendo* marking (mostly, see m. 76) to places where the pedal line is both low and slow. That makes it as easy as it can be to choreograph the use of the swell pedal or, on a modern organ, of the toe studs or the crescendo pedal. This should be incorporated into the separate pedal practicing from the beginning, not left to the step of putting parts together.

Practice strategies

It is always important to practice parts and combinations of parts thoroughly enough so at each step of the way the material being practiced becomes easy and natural. A specific reason that it is important to do so with this piece is that it is meant to go fast. Of course, no one must play it at the given metronome marking. It can be very effective slower than that, and also faster if it is executed well. However, at any tempo, it is important that the feeling of the piece not be at all deliberate, that it trip along lightly but—as it goes on—powerfully. In particular, it is important that the quick upbeat notes in the pedal part slip into the stream of sixteenth notes in the right hand in a way that has energy and momentum, and doesn't interrupt the flow of those notes. This can be achieved only if everything is very solidly—extra solidly—prepared.

This ends our trek through some aspects of the study and practicing of two very different important works of the organ repertoire. Next month I will give an overview of what we have learned and observed, and try to draw some general conclusions. ■

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In the wind . . .

by John Bishop



The seat of the Bishop

I've always been a sucker for construction equipment. The other day I was walking up Second Avenue in New York, where a new subway line is under construction, and although I was on a schedule moving between appointments I couldn't help but stop for five minutes to watch an enormous crane lowering an electrical transformer the size of a UPS truck into a hole in the street. You can read about this massive project on the website of the Metropolitan Transit Authority at <<http://www.mta.info/cap/constr/sas/>>. (sas refers to Second Avenue Subway!) I've been involved in a consultation project in New York that has led me to learn something about the city's utility system, and I've seen maps and photos that show an underground labyrinth of train, maintenance, and utility tunnels, and electrical, gas, and steam lines. It seems unlikely that there's any dirt left under the streets of the city. Knowing something about that subterranean maze helps me understand just a little of how complicated it must be to create a new tunnel some four miles long, and sixteen new underground stations. And hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of dirt, stone, and rubble removed to create the tunnel has to be trucked across the city's congested streets and river bridges to be dumped.

It's a massive project that's made possible by millions of dollars worth of heavy equipment, including my crane, tunnel-boring machines, payloaders, dump trucks, and heaven knows what else. Equipment like this has been improved immensely in the last 20 years by advances in hydraulic technology. The principal

of hydraulics is that specially formulated oil (I know the root of *hydraulic* refers to water) is pressurized in cylinders, that pressure being great enough to lift heavy loads, turn rotary motors, or steer huge articulated equipment. Without these advances we wouldn't have Bobcats, those snazzy little diggers with cabs like birdcages that can turn on a dime.

Sometime around the year 1250, the great cathedral in Chartres was completed. Nearly 800 years later it still stands as one of the great monuments to religious faith in the world. Tens of thousands of pilgrims and tourists visit there every year. The cathedral houses one of Christendom's most revered relics, the *Sancta Camisa*, reputed to be the tunic worn by the Virgin Mary at the time of Christ's birth. (*Camisa* and *camisole* come from the same root.) There is a labyrinth more than 40 feet in diameter laid in stone in the floor of the nave. The path of the labyrinth is about 13 inches wide and about 860 feet long (about a sixth of a mile), all twisted upon itself within the confines of the diameter. The towers are 300 and 350 feet tall, the ceiling of the nave is 121 feet off the floor, and the floor plan has an area of nearly 120,000 square feet, which is close to two-and-a-half acres.

Thousands and thousands of tons of stone lifted to great heights, and not a hydraulic cylinder in sight. The challenge and effort of building something like that with twelfth- and thirteenth-century technology is breathtaking. Most of us have been inside tall buildings, and most of us have been in airplanes, so we as a society are used to looking down on things. But imagine Guillaume, the thirteenth-century construction worker, coming home after a long day, flopping into a chair, taking a hearty pull from a mug of cider, and describing to his wife how that afternoon he had looked down on a bird in flight—the first man in town to be up that high!

§

On December 27, 1892, the cornerstone was laid for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on Amsterdam Avenue in New York City, one of only a few twentieth-century stone Gothic cathedrals. Celebrated as one of the largest Christian churches in world—the overall interior length of 601 feet is the longest interior measurement of any church building—it serves its modern congregation, hosts hundreds of thousands of visitors, and as the seat of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, it serves as a national centerpiece to the denomination.

While the full interior dimensions of the building have been completed, much of both the interior and exterior remain incomplete. The central tower,

The new pipe-digital combination organ at Masland Methodist Church in Sibul, Malaysia draws all eyes to the central cross, where the surrounding pipes are arranged like uplifted hands. Rodgers Instruments Corporation was honored to partner with Modern Pipe Organ Solutions of the U.K. on the installation.

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State Trumpet



View down the nave

the transepts, much of the interior finish stonework, and the two west-end towers were never built, and the building carries the popular moniker, St. John the Unfinished. Given the staggering cost of this kind of construction, there are no plans for the completion of the building. Perhaps this stunning building stands as a metaphor for us who are all incomplete before God.

Two years ago the Organ Clearing House was privileged to work with the artisans of Quimby Pipe Organs installing the restored Aeolian-Skinner organ in the two chancel organ chambers, nearly 100 feet off the floor of the nave. We spent some three months in the building, working with humbling towers of scaffolding and an electric hoist that would have been the envy of those men in thirteenth-century Chartres. We had rare opportunities to see that grand building from angles not open to the general public—somehow a hundred feet seems higher indoors than out. And we witnessed some of the challenges of maintaining such a huge building. Fixing a roof leak is a big deal when you're 150 feet up! That the cathedral's administration can manage all this is hardly short of a miracle.

There's a peculiar type of quiet present in such a building. The interior space is large enough that true quiet is probably impossible. When it's very quiet inside, one is aware of the distant sounds of the city, and even of a kind of interior wind blowing. Sitting in the nave or the Great Choir in this special quiet, I imagine the

hustle and bustle of construction: how workers managed 60-foot granite pillars that were quarried in Vinalhaven, Maine, transported to New York on barges, and hauled across the city by steam-powered tractors in 1903; how workers hoisted tons of precisely cut stones to form the fabric of the vaulted ceilings; how workers created stone spiral stairways inside the cathedral's walls leading to such places as organ chambers; and how workers created the ornate spectacular 10-ton marble pulpit—festooned with such delicate carvings that during the installation of the organ we built a heavy plywood barricade around it so as not to damage it with a battering-ram in the form of a 32-foot organ pipe!

And let's not forget what could be considered the real work—the evangelizing, preaching, persuading, and cajoling necessary to raise the money for all this, unfinished or not.

A house for all people

Why do we go to all this trouble? This cathedral has been host to countless extraordinary events, held there because of the extraordinary scale and dignity of the place. Twelve-thousand-five-hundred people attended the funeral of Duke Ellington in 1974. (I wonder how much the cathedral organist had to do with that.) In 1986 Philippe Petit, the high-wire artist who had walked between the twin towers of the World Trade Center, performed his work *Ascent* inside the cathedral, accompanied by the music of the Paul Winter Consort. Petit is listed on every service

bulletin as one of the cathedral's artists-in-residence. In the documentary film about his twin-tower feat, *Man on Wire*, Petit wore a "Cathedral of St. John the Divine" t-shirt.

In 1986, Archbishop Desmond Tutu preached an anti-apartheid sermon. In 1990, Big Bird, Bert, Ernie, and the rest of the Muppets helped celebrate the life of their creator, Jim Henson. In 1997, South African President Nelson Mandela preached at a memorial service for anti-apartheid activist Archbishop Trevor Huddleston. And in 2000, New York Mayor John Lindsay's funeral packed the place. My wife Wendy attended that service and came home raving about how cathedral organist Dorothy Papadakos had played the crowd out at the end of the service with Leonard Bernstein's tune, *New York, New York, It's a Wonderful Town* (immortalized by Frank Sinatra), complete with fanfares from the State Trumpet under the west end rose window—perfect.

We need special places like that for events like those.

§

Wendy and I have been in New York for two months, living in an apartment in Greenwich Village we've borrowed from my parents' next-door neighbors. While Wendy has been working with editors in publishing companies promoting the manuscripts produced by her clients, the Organ Clearing House has tuned a few organs, and dismantled a marvelous, pristine E. M. Skinner organ from a closed church building in the Bronx for relocation to the new worship space of an active Lutheran parish in Iowa, to be restored by Jeff Weiler & Associates of Chicago. Last year we renovated and relocated a 1916 Casavant organ to a church in Manhattan—the dedication recital is in a couple days, and we spent the last week tweaking and tuning it in preparation.

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine is on my mind because we attended Evensong there last Sunday evening. It was a beautiful service, loaded with music, prayer, scripture, and a moving sermon. We sat in the ornately carved oak pews of the Great Choir, surrounded by magnificent decoration and in the midst of a modest congregation. The choir's singing was wonderful, the organ was played with true inspiration, and I was aware that we were participating in regular weekly worship in that place where so many of the world's most powerful and revered figures have led and participated in worship. The sense that the place equipped to welcome thousands to a huge event is open and welcoming to us on an ordinary Sunday afternoon was moving to me. You don't often sing hymns in the presence of an organ with 150 ranks.

A study in scale

Some months ago I brought a group of friends to see the cathedral. Organist Stephen Tharp was practicing in preparation for his presentation of the complete organ works of Jeanne Demessieux. As we listened, I told them a little about the size, resources, and complexity of the organ, and one asked me why you would need so many stops. I pointed out ornate decorations throughout the building—carved pews, filigreed lamps, Gothic arches and vaults, tiled stairways, wrought-iron gates, bronze medallions inlaid in the floor—and suggested that such a large organ complements a build-

ing with more than a dozen chapels and all this finery. We love the sound of a string celeste. It's even better to have two celestes to choose from. But this organ has eight sets of celestes—unimaginable wealth, especially when you consider that all the celeste ranks except the Swell Unda Maris go all the way to low C! When an organist moves skillfully around this organ, the range of tone colors seems limitless—a kaleidoscope of tone color, with a range of volume from the roar of thunder to a barely audible whisper—exactly in scale with the size and decoration of the building itself.

And cathedral organist Bruce Neswick did just that in his improvised closing voluntary last Sunday—he morphed away from the tune of the recessional hymn into a harmonically and rhythmically sophisticated fantasy, gave a climactic fanfare on the State Trumpet, then melted seamlessly from the robust full organ to the whisper of that Unda Maris. You could hardly tell when the music stopped.

When the installation of the renovated organ was completed and the organ had been given a chance to "settle in," the cathedral presented a series of dedicatory recitals by such distinguished artists as Daniel Röth, Olivier Latry, Gerre Hancock, Thierry Escaich, and Peter Conte. What a thrill to hear such programs on such an organ. But take it from me, Neswick shares that organ with the Sunday afternoon congregation as if the Queen was in attendance. Perhaps it's his joy of sitting on the bench of such a distinguished and stunning instrument. Perhaps it's his sense of the privilege of presenting music in worship in such a place. Certainly it made me feel like royalty to be so treated, the tariff being what I chose to drop in the basket during the offertory.

Party horn

Another example of the relationship between the scale of the building and the scale of the organ is the State Trumpet—a single eight-foot rank of trumpet pipes mounted horizontally under the rose window facing east down the length of the nave. This must be the most famous single organ stop in the world. It plays on wind pressure of 50 inches—something like the pressure of the air in a tractor tire, and nothing like the levels of pressure commonly used in organs. The pipes are shackled in place to prevent them from launching as missiles down the nave. And there's an octave of dummy 16-foot bass pipes. They don't speak—they're there to make the rank of pipes look like something in that vast space. The thing is majestic. It's almost 600 feet from the organ console—two football fields. It would take a little more than six seconds to cover that distance in a car traveling at 60 miles per hour. It seems as though you can draw the stop,

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play a note, and eat a sandwich before the sound reaches your ears. (No mayo on the keys, please.) The sound is broad and powerful, sonorous and thrilling. There can be no building better suited to enclose such a sound.

But here's the problem. When the new State Trumpet was introduced in the cathedral as part of the 1954 expansion and rebuilding of the organ by Aeolian-Skinner, every ambitious organist wanted one. And too many organists got their wish. Today there are hundreds of modest parish churches cursed with the sound of a too-loud but not-too-good *Trompette en Chamade*, searing the airways six feet above the too-big hair of the bride and her attendants. The proud organist can't get enough of it, but everyone else can. Just because St. John the Divine has one, the pretty church on the town square doesn't need one.

It's a matter of scale

All of us who have toiled in the vineyards of church music have experienced the "big productions" of our parishes—a Christmas pageant, the wedding of the pastor's daughter, Easter Sunday with trumpets and timpani. Imagine the big production for the cathedral organist. The country's president might be attending a memorial service. National television cameras are often present. And on a festive Sunday morning, 1,800 people might come to the altar to receive Communion. That's a lot of noodling around with *Let Us Break Bread Together on Our Knees*.

Our two months in New York have brought lots of great experiences, dozens of subway rides, and the rich experience of getting familiar with all that a great city has to offer. I encourage and invite you to visit the city and to hear some of the great organs and great organists in some of the world's great churches. Start with St. John the Divine, and work your way around town. The New York City Chapter of the American Guild of Organists has a fine website with a calendar of events.

And after Tuesday's recital, I'm looking forward to going home next week where there really is dirt under the streets. ■

Photos of St. John the Divine courtesy Quimby Pipe Organs.

Music for voices and organ

by James McCray

Psalms: Cogent guideposts

The church with psalms must shout,
No door can keep them out:
But above all, the heart
Must bear the longest part.

*George Herbert (1593–1633)
Antiphon*

Psalm texts are among the most remembered words. Each week, in various religious institutions, they are read, spoken, or sung, and their repetition never seems to tire. These ancient thoughts bring comfort and strength, and are heard so often that, without special effort, some phrases have been memorized. For example, silently finish these Psalm phrases: "The Lord is my shepherd . . ." or "Be still and . . ." This is a very easy challenge for most of this column's readers, who probably have conducted them in musical settings numerous times. These wonderful words were originally sung, so it is no surprise that they have continued to inspire contemporary composers.

In pagan Greece, the word *psalmos* meant "a plucking of strings of a harp, or a song sung to a harp accompaniment." Over the centuries, the word went through over 30 different spellings in various languages. It became *salm*, *saume*, *salme*, but eventually the "p" was restored. Composers find their messages beautiful, profound, and in most cases, immediately musical.

The value of the Psalms to composers and to weekly worship services should not be underestimated. These universal

messages adapt themselves to diverse musical styles, as well as to various performance groups in schools, community choirs, and even praise bands. Today, each new parcel of offerings from publishers usually includes choral works based on Psalm texts. They seem to be generic in tone, which makes them more marketable, especially to those who seek a more expansive clientele beyond the church. Music publishers make these available in exact textual settings or as paraphrased examples.

An interesting exercise for you, dear readers, is to go through your church choir library and make a list of all the settings you currently own that are based on Psalm texts. Then, in the future, as you plan music for the services, you can identify settings you have of the day's Psalm as designated by the lectionary. Hearing a Psalm as a call to worship, anthem, or prayer response in addition to having it read during the service as part of the weekly liturgy will bring a special cohesiveness and understanding to the congregation's worship.

The Psalms offer a wide range of topics. Although many seem to overlap with each other, themes such as praise, music, refuge, etc. have a powerful spirit that for centuries transcended diverse civilizations and denominations. These glorious words speak to all people as cogent guideposts for how to live. What a special gift!

The reviews this month feature musical settings of Psalm texts. So, as church choir directors, we join this celebration by recalling the words of Psalm 95:

O come, let us sing unto the Lord
Let us heartily rejoice in the strength of
our salvation
Let us come before his presence with
thanksgiving
And show ourselves glad in him with
psalms.

Psalm 67, David Ashley White. SATB unaccompanied, Paraclete Press, PPM00710, \$2.10 (M).

The harmony moves through a mixture of some mild dissonant chords, which alternate with unison phrases. A middle section has busy sixteenth-note passages that make the music feel a bit frantic, but exciting. The opening material returns (ABA) as the music quietly ends on "Amen."

Come, Let Us Sing to the Lord (Psalm 95), Paul D. Weber. SATB, soprano solo, and organ with optional violin, MorningStar Music Publishers, MSM-50-2647, \$2.35 (M+).

The violin music consists of long, flowing sixteenth notes, which are doubled in the organ for use when the violin is not used. These busy, diatonic lines dominate the opening section, which is sung by the soprano soloist. The second section, based on the soloist's music, opens for SSAA voices, then changes to SSATB. The violin and organ play throughout the entire anthem. There is one short section for TTBB, then the opening vocal solo/violin music returns for the closing section, which builds to a loud, divisi ending.

Psalm 150, Walter L. Pelz. SATB, organ with optional brass quartet and timpani, Augsburg Fortress, 978-0-8066-9720-8, \$2.75 (M).

The choral parts are on two staves with brief moments of SA divisi. There is a majestic, fanfare spirit to the music, which is generally loud except for a short, slower middle section when the text speaks of stringed instruments. This choral score does not contain the brass music; however, a full score and brass parts may be downloaded from Augsburg. Exciting music with immediate appeal to singers and congregation.

To You, O Lord (Psalm 25), Thomas Keesecker. SATB and piano, Augsburg Fortress, 978-0-8006-6413-8, \$1.75 (M).

Choral parts are on two staves with the first two pages in unison; later large sections are for two-part mixed voices. The piano accompaniment has arpeggios and repeated chords in the right hand with some syncopation, yet the

keyboard part is not difficult. Although there is a fast tempo, the mood of the setting is quietly prayerful.

Three Songs of Petition from the Psalms, John L. Bell. SATB unaccompanied, GIA Publications, Inc., G 6202, \$1.20 (E).

These one-page settings of brief Psalm phrases consist of simple chords on two staves. The Psalms used are 43, 62, and 19. There are alternate performance possibilities suggested (vocal solo with chorus, optional "Amen's", and as Intros in Advent). Easy and pragmatic music.

Be Still (Psalm 46), Mary McDonald. Beckenhorst Press, BP 1902, \$1.95 (M-).

This has the character of a piano solo with choir. Throughout, the piano has dramatic chordal passages in two hands over a sustained low octave, or with left-hand arpeggios. The choral parts, on two staves, are often in parallel thirds. The music moves through different keys, each in short sections, and is never loud.

Bless the Lord, O My Soul (Psalm 104), Emma Lou Diemer. SATB and keyboard with optional 2 trumpets, 2 trombones and percussion, Hal Leonard, HL #08761360, \$2.35 (M).

The accompaniment introduction is filled with repeated block chords that lead to an opening choral refrain that returns later in the setting. The refrain is always repeated with the congregation joining in on it. Typical of Diemer is a very active keyboard accompaniment, which, while not difficult, is a driving force to the music. Strong rhythms are used throughout in this fast, energetic, and delightful setting. Highly recommended!

How Dear to Me Is Your Dwelling (Psalm 84), Bruce Neswick. SATB unaccompanied, Paraclete Press, PPM 00703, \$2.80 (M+).

This anthem has a variety of textures with some counterpoint and some divisi for the sopranos. The slow tempo is complemented with mild dissonances, fre-

quent short unison passages, and a feeling of calmness. The music is well crafted and sophisticated in style and mood.

From Age to Age the Same (Psalm 46), Lloyd Larson. SATB, organ, and optional solo trumpet or brass and timpani, and congregation, Lorenz Music Corp., 10/4039L, \$1.95 (M).

The last half of the setting incorporates the great Luther hymn, *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*. The congregation joins the choir in singing this popular hymn tune, and their music is on the back cover for duplication. Choral parts are on two staves, often in unison during the first half of the anthem. This bold setting will make a great addition to the choir's Reformation Day service, although the editor points out various Scripture references in Joshua, Isaiah, Romans, and Psalms 34, 46, 65, 119, 137, and 144, which suggest that this anthem would also be appropriate for Lent.

Four Psalm Motets, Carl Schalk. SATB unaccompanied, MorningStar Music Publishers, MSM-50-2520, \$2.75 (M).

The four Psalms are 46, 84, 104, and 128; each is 4–6 pages in length. Generally they are contrapuntal, some with long melismatic lines. Vocal ranges are comfortable and while the music is not difficult, there is a keyboard reduction for rehearsal that could be used for support of weaker choirs. These settings will be a bargain since they average out to about 53 cents each. Practical yet effective music.

Book Reviews

Stephen L. Pinel, *Organbuilding along the Erie and Chenango Canals: Alvinza and George N. Andrews of Utica, New York*. Richmond, Virginia: OHS Press, 2010. Hardback, xxix + 300 pp.; <www.organsociety.org>.

Stephen Pinel is a well-known and respected scholar among organ historians,

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