

move

# Great Hall Grandeur Amy Johansen







## 1 Toccata John Weaver (b. 1937)

The composer writes: "The Toccata was composed during my second year as a student at the Curtis Institute of Music (1960). It is dedicated to Grace Newsome Cushman, a remarkable theory teacher from the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and the director of a summer music camp in Vermont which I attended from my early teens. I later was deeply involved in the teaching and administration of the camp. I wrote it at a time when I was feeling that the organ literature was in need of more joyful pieces, and so I set out to write a toccata with a decidedly sunny disposition. It has been recorded several times and is often used as a wedding recessional."

John Weaver has been Director of Music at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City since 1970. He was Head of the Organ Department at the Curtis Institute from 1972 to 2003, and Chair of the Organ Department at the Juilliard School of Music from 1987 to 2004. He also taught organ at Westminster Choir College, the Manhattan School of Music, and Union Theological

Seminary. A frequent recitalist and composer of several works for organ, he is also an avid train enthusiast with a huge model railroad at his home.

## 2-5 Concerto in D minor after Vivaldi, BWV 596 J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Performances of Italian string concertos were a regular feature of musical life at the Court of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, where Bach worked from 1708 to 1717. As an accomplished string player, Bach no doubt took part in these performances, but he also found a more effective way of penetrating to the heart of the Italian style, by transcribing many of these works for solo keyboard. Bach's own creative personality was profoundly affected by this vibrant music from Southern Europe - by its relentless, motoric rhythmic drive, by its wealth of characteristic musical figures and turns of phrase, and by the formal principle of the concerto *ritornello* or recurring theme, which offered endless possibilities for the building of large-scale musical structures.

Long believed to be an original composition by Bach's son Friedemann (who rubbed out his father's name on the manuscript, and substituted his own), this Concerto in D minor is an arrangement by J.S. Bach of Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Violins, Op.3 no.11. It begins with a lively canonic duet above insistent repeated pedal notes, and then a few full chords lead into a dancing fugue. The slow movement is a lilting *siciliano*, and the concerto ends in a vigorous finale with a pungent chromatic *ritornello*.

## 6 Master Tallis's Testament Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Herbert Howells was one of the most English of all English composers; the visionary, pastoral quality of his music seemed to spring quite naturally from the mellow landscapes of the Gloucestershire countryside where he was born. Although, in his own words, he was 'not a religious man', Howells was the only major British composer of his generation to write a substantial quantity of church music; this is now frequently and universally performed, rather unfairly overshadowing his other achievements in the realms of orchestral and chamber music.

One of the most memorable experiences of Howells' early life was a concert in Gloucester Cathedral in 1910, which included the premiere of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a theme of Thomas Tallis*. He felt a profound and 'intuitive affinity' with this contemporary re-interpretation of the Tudor style, and many years later he described his own *Master Tallis's Testament* (1940) as a 'footnote' to the Vaughan Williams Fantasia. It takes the form of a theme and two variations - a poignant lament in which the melodic conventions of the 16th century combine with the subtle tints of Howells' own modal harmony to create an original work of art of haunting, timeless beauty.

### 7-8 Sonata No. 3 Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Most of the great romantic composer/pianists (Liszt, Schumann, Brahms, and even Chopin) tried their hand at organ playing at one time or another, but Mendelssohn was the only one who took a serious and lifelong interest in the 'King of Instruments'. At heart this was a private, personal passion; in his day he stood apart from the mainstream of the organ profession, and he had no pupils. But after his death, his organ works - and the Six Sonatas in particular - exercised an enormous influence on the art of organ-playing all over Europe. Mendelssohn rarely played the organ in public in his own country; his greatest successes were in England, where 'his masterly performances aroused universal admiration and delight'. The 'Six Grand Sonatas' were commissioned by an English publisher in 1844, and published the following year to generous critical acclaim. 'These intensely poetical new ideas' wrote Schumann, 'what a perfect picture they form in every Sonata! In Bach's music I always imagine him sitting at the organ, but in yours I rather think of a St. Cecilia touching the keys...'

The first movement of the Third Sonata had its origins in a much earlier work, as Mendelssohn revealed in a letter which he wrote to his sister Fanny in July 1844: 'Please look out for the organ piece in A major that I composed for your wedding, and wrote in Wales, and send it back to me by return of post... I love the beginning, but detest the middle, so I am completely re-writing it...' The new middle section is an agitated fugue in the minor key, into which

Mendelssohn introduces the tune of the penitential chorale *Aus tiefer Noth*, making a striking contrast to the majestic wedding music, which returns at the end to bring this long and complex movement to a triumphant conclusion. The sonata then concludes in complete simplicity with a short *Andante* in Mendelssohn's most melodious style.

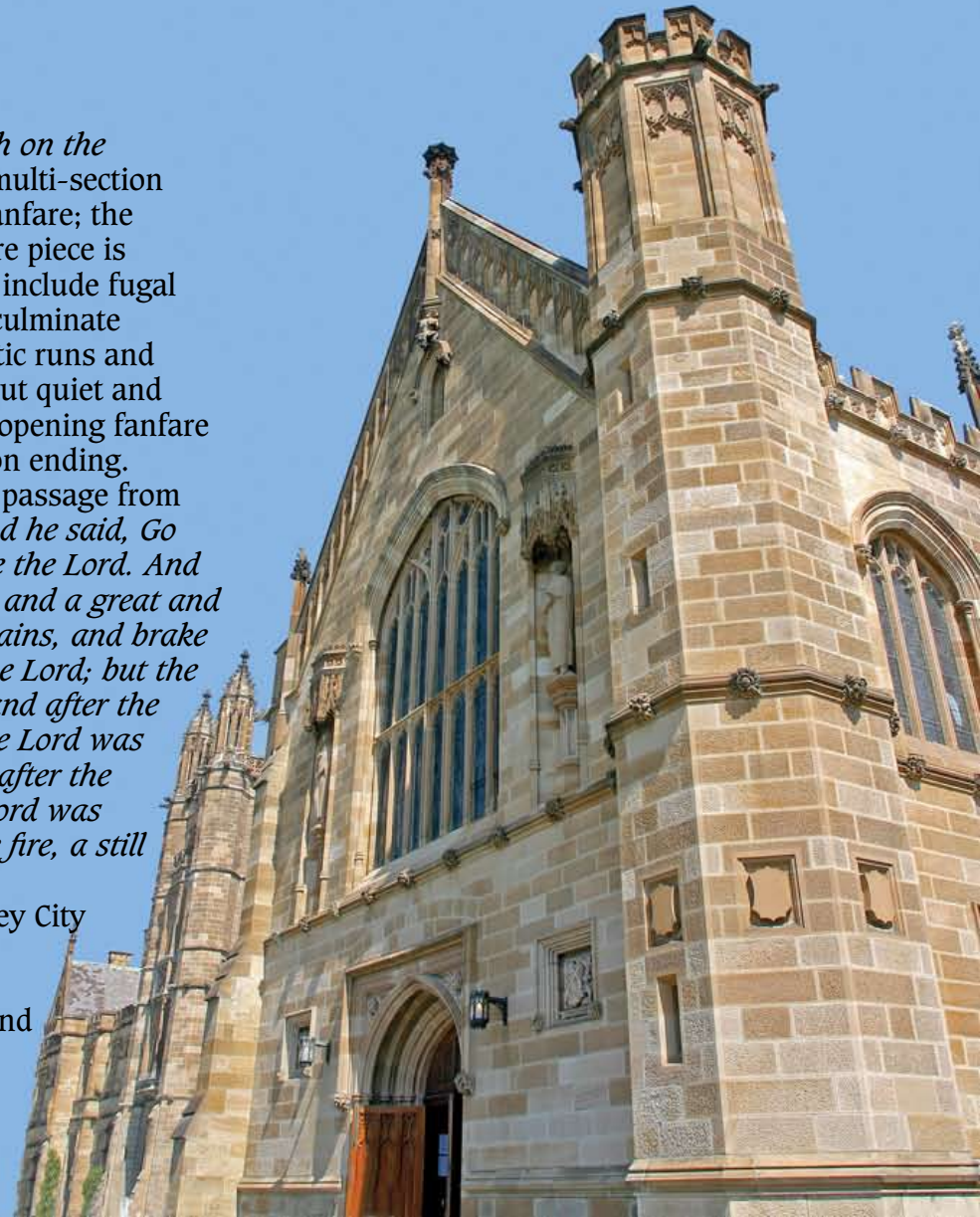
### 9 Elijah on the Mountain Robert Ampt (b. 1949)

The composer writes: "*Elijah on the Mountain* is a continuous, multi-section work opening with a bold fanfare; the motive upon which the entire piece is based. Subsequent sections include fugal and ostinato passages and culminate in a full-organ series of hectic runs and dense chords. A dramatic, but quiet and contemplative return to the opening fanfare leads to a mysterious, unison ending. The work is inspired by the passage from the First Book of Kings : *And he said, Go forth upon the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire, a still small voice.*"

Robert Ampt is the Sydney City Organist, Organist and Choirmaster of Sydney's German Lutheran Church, and an organ teacher at the University of Sydney.

### 10 Bells Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

Organist of the Basilica of Sainte-Clotilde in Paris from 1945 until his retirement in 1987, Jean Langlais was the most prolific French organ composer of his generation. While he was still a student, his composition





tutor Paul Dukas told him that he was 'a born composer', and this judgment was vindicated by the effortless flow of new works which he produced during the next sixty years, works that were never as revolutionary as the music of his friend Messiaen, but which nevertheless had a unique and instantly recognisable personality of their own. Commissioned by a London publishing company in 1957, Langlais' 'Three Characteristic Pieces' adopts a deliberately simple, transparent style of writing, in homage to the 18th century English composer John Stanley. The last piece, *Bells*, is a short toccata which rings the changes in a sparkling sequence of chiming motifs, ending with a final resounding peal on the pedals.

#### **11 Mein junges Leben hat ein End Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)**

The Dutch composer and teacher Sweelinck was one of the most important musical figures of his time, forming a vital link in the chain that leads from the earliest composers of keyboard music through to the North German organists of the 17th century, and on to J.S. Bach. Sweelinck was known as 'The Orpheus of Amsterdam', and he was Organist at the Oude Kerk there for more than forty years. During his lifetime the city grew from a modest provincial port into a flourishing international trading and cultural centre. Although very little is known about Sweelinck's life, it is clear that he soon became a celebrity, and a visit to the church to hear the 'incomparable' organist was considered an essential part of the sight-seeing itinerary for every important visitor to Amsterdam.

In the years following the Reformation in Holland, the organ took no part in the services of the church; strict Calvinists considered organ-playing to be an offensively worldly affair. The organs belonged to the City Councils, and Sweelinck was employed by Amsterdam City Council to give concerts at least once a day. Freed from the requirements of congregational accompaniment, the organs of Holland were



distinguished by their richness and variety of colour – ideally suited to variations on dance tunes and secular ballads; forms in which Sweelinck excelled. The six exquisite variations on the folksong *Mein junges Leben* form one of his finest surviving works. They blossom into increasingly virtuosic elaboration, but end as they began, in eloquent simplicity, reflecting the poignant words of the song: 'My young life is at an end, my joys and also my sorrows ...'

#### **12 Trumpet Tune in E flat David N. Johnson (1922-1987)**

Very few composers of the twentieth century have so often and so actively contributed to the genre of festive and ceremonial music for organ as did David N(athaniel) Johnson (1922-1987). Born in San Antonio, Texas, Johnson was an organ major at the Curtis Institute, Philadelphia and, following doctoral and composition studies, served as either Chair or Professor of Music at a number of universities before settling in Arizona. There he headed the music faculty of the State University and served as organist and choirmaster at the Episcopal Cathedral in Phoenix.

The *Trumpet Tune* in E flat recorded here, and subtitled 'Homage to the 18th century', is a prime example of Johnson's legacy of occasional music that comprises at least eighteen such pieces for organ solo cast in a variety of keys. Bearing a dedication to Belgian organist Flor Peeters, it was published by Oxford University Press in 1964 in a volume called 'An Album of Postludes'. It has long been a favourite of mine and a piece that I can never resist recommending to brides for their wedding processional owing to its inherent attractiveness and mood of joyous dignity.

#### **13 Moto ostinato Petr Eben (b. 1929)**

The Czech composer Petr Eben has written music in many different forms, but it is his organ works that have particularly caught the imagination of players and audiences worldwide. Most of Eben's music has a spiritual or philosophical inspiration; in

particular, the eternal struggle between Good and Evil, between God and the Devil, has provided a subtext for several major works, reflecting his own experiences as a teenage internee in a Nazi concentration camp, and later as a Catholic composer working under a communist regime. The dramatic *Moto Ostinato* is the third movement of Eben's *Sunday Music* (1958). It was inspired by the Gospel story of the man possessed by devils, who said to Jesus, *My name is Legion, for we are many...*; 'pictured as a mediaeval combat, the assailants advance, rank upon rank, to the fray.' A strong vein of melody runs throughout the piece, but - as the title implies - it is the insistent rhythmic motif which accompanies it that establishes the sinister, oppressive character of the music. The ostinato begins quietly, but gradually builds up tension, and finally erupts in an explosion of primaevael energy, rampaging from the bottom to the top of both keyboard and pedalboard, and then hammered out by the full power of the organ on the spectacular final page.

#### 14 Romance from Symphonie IV Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

Louis Vierne was the great romantic among the French organist/composers of his generation. Organist of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris for nearly forty years, he died there, playing the instrument he loved, in the middle of a recital in June 1937. Born almost blind, Vierne was inevitably inclined to introspection; he described his own nature as 'hypersensitive, the source of intense joy and inexpressible pain', and his artistic creed was summed up in this revealing confession: 'I do not

believe that a musician who, as a man, is incapable of love or suffering, will ever create anything of real beauty'.

The fourth of Vierne's six Organ Symphonies was written on the eve of the First World War, in the summer of 1914. It is a dark, angry work, which, in his own words, is 'brightened for a moment by the fragments of a happy dream, but ends in



a fever'. Contrasting the lost happiness of the past with the turbulence of the present, the tender *Romance* is a dream of love, and the melodic line is typical of Vierne in its poised but passionate intensity. In the middle, brooding music from earlier in the Symphony attempts to cast ominous shadows, but it is miraculously transformed, soaring to a lyrical climax, and subsiding into a magical final page, in which Vierne

truly 'orchestrates' for the organ, with ravishing effect. The initial melody sings out on a solo flute high in the treble, doubled two octaves below by the pizzicato quavers of the right foot, while the left foot supplies the bass line, and the left hand provides a pianistic accompaniment of gently rippling arpeggio figuration.

#### 15 Toccata Colin Brumby (b. 1933)

The composer writes: "This Toccata was commissioned in 1995 by Paul Gunning in memory of his brother and sister-in-law, Clive and Margaret Gunning, who were killed in a car crash in Scotland in August 1994. During Clive's career, he held church organist positions in both Sydney and Glasgow. He bequested to St James Presbyterian Church, Orange, a practice pipe organ he had commissioned by Roger Pogson. It was at the dedication of this memorial to Clive and Margaret Gunning on 28th October 1995, that Peter Kneeshaw gave the first public performance of this work. It was played again at the wedding of Paul Gunning's eldest daughter in June 1996. It was also played in 2002 at the dedication of an organ in St Margaret's, Knightswood, Glasgow, an instrument which Clive Gunning had been involved with, just prior to his death, in order to have it acquired for restoration.

"Regarding the music, it is typical of that musical form that the Toccata has been crafted to provide a vehicle for a display of the organist's performance skills. It is cast in binary or two-part form, each half consisting of, firstly, a section requiring considerable manual dexterity and, secondly, one



requiring considerable agility of the feet on the pedalboard."

Colin Brumby is one of Australia's leading composers, and his work represents nearly every form in the musical catalog for a diverse array of instruments. He graduated from the Melbourne University Conservatorium of Music and undertook advanced composition studies in Spain and London. He was the founding Musical Director of the Queensland Opera Company, and is currently Associate Professor in the School of Music at the University of Queensland.

Notes by David Gammie (2-8, 10, 11, 13, 14), John Weaver (1), Robert Ampt (9), Ralph Lane (12), and Colin Brumby (15)



## Thanks

Special thanks to all those who assisted in various ways to make this recording possible: The University of Sydney and Yeoman Bedell Staff, Stuart Garside, Robert and Emily Ampt, Lorna Buining, Jane Bolinowsky, Hanna Oblikov, and Christina McGuinness.

This recording is dedicated in loving memory to my mother, Elsie Jakobik Johansen, for her boundless love, support and encouragement of my musical activities, which will be forever treasured.

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Martin Wright

**EDITING:**  
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**MASTERING:**  
Martin Wright



# THE GREAT HALL ORGAN

Rudolf von Beckerath, 1972

## GREAT

Principal 16  
Principal 8  
Rohrflöte 8  
Octave 4  
Nachthorn 4  
Nasat 2-2/3  
Octave 2  
Mixture IV  
Scharf VI  
Cornet IV-V  
Trumpet 16  
Trumpet 8  
Trumpet 4

## POSITIV

Principal 8  
Gedackt 8  
Quintadena 8  
Octave 4  
Rohrflöte 4  
Nasat 2-2/3  
Octave 2  
Tierce 1-3/5  
Larigot 1-1/3  
Sifflöte 1  
Scharf IV-VI  
Rankett 16  
Cromorne 8  
Tremolo

## SWELL (enclosed)

Rohrflöte 16  
Holzflöte 8  
Gemshorn 8  
Unda Maris 8  
Principal 4  
Blockflöte 4  
Nasat 2-2/3  
Flachflöte 2  
Tierce 1-3/5  
Septime 1-1/7  
Mixture V-VII  
Fagott 16  
Trumpet 8  
Oboe 8  
Schalmei 4  
Tremolo

## PEDAL

Principal 16  
Subbass 16  
Octave 8  
Rohrgedackt 8  
Metallflöte 4  
Nachthorn 2  
Rauschpfeife III  
Mixture V  
Dulcian 16  
Posaune 16  
Trumpet 8  
Trumpet 4

## ACTION

Key action: Mechanical  
Coupler and Stop action: Electric

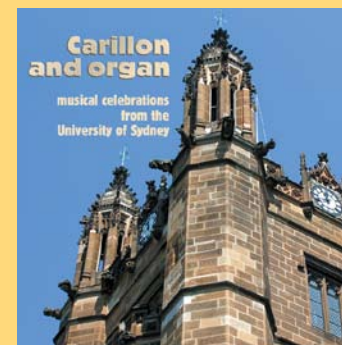
## COUPLERS (All duplicated by toe pistons)

Swell to Great  
Positiv to Great  
Swell to Pedal  
Great to Pedal  
Positiv to Pedal

## COMBINATION PISTONS

6 general pistons (1-4 duplicated by toe pistons)  
2 divisional pistons on each manual and pedal  
SSL Memory: 128 Levels  
Sequencer: Next and Previous

The Great Hall organ was designed and voiced by Rudolf von Beckerath of Hamburg, Germany. Ronald Sharp of Sydney, Australia (builder of the Sydney Opera House Organ), constructed the windchests and wind supply and all of the wooden pipes for the Swell and Pedal divisions (Queensland maple). He also organized the building of the case by the University carpenters and supervised assembly of the organ.



**Companion CD features the spectacular combination of carillon and organ**

- 1** Gaudeamus Igitur – carillon/organ
- 2** Reich mir die Hand, mein Leben (Mozart) – carillon
- 3** Trumpet Voluntary (Jeremiah Clarke) – organ
- 4** Greensleeves – carillon
- 5** Badinerie (Bach) – organ
- 6** Londonderry Air – carillon
- 7** Rustic Landscape (Pozdro) – carillon
- 8** Hornpipe from *Water Music* (Handel) – organ
- 9** Romance d'Espagne (Cano) – carillon
- 10** 'Gigue' Fugue (Bach) – organ
- 11** Variations on a French Noel – carillon
- 12** Was I not a Flower in the Meadows? – carillon
- 13** Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (Bach) – carillon
- 14** Sinfonia from *Cantata 29* (Bach) – organ
- 15** Cantique de Noel (Adam) – carillon
- 16** Provataky – carillon
- 17** Greek Shepherdess – carillon
- 18** Allegro from *Organ Concerto in F* (Handel) – organ
- 19** Resonet in Laudibus – carillon
- 20** Carillon de Westminster – carillon/organ

**Jill Forrest** War Memorial carillon

**Amy Johansen** Great Hall organ

The University of Sydney

## ... including bonus video

The *Carillon and Organ* CD includes an 8 minute video CD-ROM MPEG which shows Amy Johansen playing an extract from Petr Eben's *Moto Ostinato*, and the complete Bach *Badinerie*. Also included are the closing bars of *Gaudeamus Igitur* as performed on the organ before the carillon bells were added followed by the final mixed version of the same bars with the carillon.

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**Amy Johansen**

**Amy Johansen** has served as Sydney University Organist since 1997. Her duties include playing for over sixty graduation ceremonies annually and organising the organ recital series. She is also an Honorary Carillonist at the University. Her Bachelors and Masters degrees were completed in the United States, with postgraduate studies in England and France. She also holds Associateship Diplomas of the American Guild of Organists and the Royal College of Organists, London. Although her repertoire encompasses all periods of music, it was her first CD, *The Embrace of Fire*, devoted to the organ music of her former teacher Naji Hakim (organist at La Trinité, Paris), which initially brought her international acclaim. She has performed often as soloist and accompanist with Australian and foreign ensembles including the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, The Sydney Philharmonia Choir, Sydney Chamber Choir and the Scottish National Orchestra Choir, with her performances broadcast on American Public Radio's *Pipedreams*, the ABC, and the BBC. Her recordings are available on the Move, Newington and Pro Organo labels. Amy and her husband, Sydney City Organist Robert Ampt, have developed a specialization in organ duets and children's "Introduction to the Organ" programmes.



John Weaver (b. 1937)

**1** Toccata 4'15"

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Concerto in D minor after Vivaldi, BWV 596

**2** (*Allegro*)/ *Grave* 1'27"

**3** *Fuga* 3'20"

**4** *Largo e spiccato* 2'32"

**5** (*Allegro*) 3'24"

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

**6** Master Tallis's Testament 6'36"

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Sonata No. 3

**7** *Con moto maestoso* 8'25"

**8** *Andante tranquillo* 2'34"

Robert Ampt (b. 1949)

**9** Elijah on the Mountain 8'17"

Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

**10** Bells 2'42"

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)

**11** Mein junges Leben hat ein End 7'52"

David N. Johnson (1922-1987)

**12** Trumpet Tune in E flat 2'55"

Petr Eben (b. 1929)

**13** Moto ostinato 5'09"

Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

**14** *Romance* from Symphonie IV 8'25"

Colin Brumby (b. 1933)

**15** Toccata 5'28"

# Great Hall Grandeur

AMY JOHANSEN plays the  
ORGAN in the GREAT HALL,

RUDOLF VON BECKERATH  
University of Sydney

