

Westfield Center & Christ Church Cathedral
present

**Michael Gormley &
Erica Johnson**

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Partita super *Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig* (11 variations on the chorale)

César Franck (1822-1890)

Choral No. 3 in A-minor

Mr. Gormley

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)

Toccata in C

Giuseppe Torelli (1658-1709), arr. Joh. Gottfried Walther (1684-1748)

Concerto in A minor

Vivace-Adagio

Allegro

William Albright (1944-1998)

Flights of Fancy: Ballet for Organ

Pas de deux

Johann Ludwig Krebs (1713-1780)

Prelude and Fugue in C Major

Ms. Johnson appearance comes as a gift
from Jonathan Knell Gifford to The John Ernest Foundation

Over the next few days there will be much spoken about, thought of and played from the music of Bach. I would like to take this 30 minute recital to introduce to you some of the tonal possibilities of this instrument for the music of Bach as I have come to enjoy exploring it over the past few months since the organ was installed.

The organ does however speak another language. I hope you will find that Hellmuth Wolff's organ here at Christ Church Cathedral is also very well suited to the music of the French Romantics. I also thought it would be a good idea to let the organ "stretch its legs" a bit! At the end of the Franck Chorale, pretty well the whole instrument will be singing its heart out.

--- M. Gormley

A dance for two, a close relationship between two people or things, a step for two—*pas de deux* describes the musical relationship between Germany and Italy already from the early sixteenth century. Italy can be viewed as the leading partner, Germany as the follower. Indeed, the Italian approach to form, figuration, and embellishment served as the model for centuries to come in Northern Europe. As with any dance, individuality and collectivity exist with every step, every gesture. Imitation is accepted fully, or embraced with more flexibility. So it is with the Italian style in the North. We hear distinct elements of the Venetian toccata in Sweelinck's Toccata, for example, although they are fused with some of Sweelinck's favorite keyboard techniques: echo effects, triadic imitation, and inventive scalar figuration.

Other northerners, such as Johann Sebastian Bach and his cousin, Johann Gottfried Walther, educated themselves intimately in the latest Italian developments by transcribing fashionable concertos. Here, most certainly, is the dance step one of imitation. By arranging these chamber works for solo keyboard performance, these composers brought Italian music not only into their homes or churches but into their own compositions as well. Elements of the concerto form and especially of Italianate string figuration abound in the free compositions of Bach and his circle. Krebs, as a student of Bach, clearly draws on this "Germanicized" Italian toccata style in both the prelude and fugue. The opening virtuosic figuration—here performed with echoes reminiscent of the Sweelinck school—represents a close step in the Italian-German dance. While Krebs imitates certain features of the Italian style, he also creates a new and distinctive path.

While Albright may be viewed by some as bordering on the *avant garde*, he too dances between tradition and innovation. Fashioned as a *lamento*, this particular movement plays to our emotions not with traditional chromaticism, but with surprising changes of texture, harmony, and clusters. Albright's music seems to beckon the listener as a dance partner—one who is both sympathetic and questioning.

--- E. Johnson

Michael Gormley was born in Saint John, New Brunswick. He received his early musical training there and at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia before completing his studies at the Vienna Academy of Music in Austria in Church Music, Organ, Choral and Orchestral Conducting under Michael Radulescu, Hans Gillesberger, Anton Heiller, Hilde Seidlhofer and Karl Österreicher. In 1976 he was third prizewinner at the Bologna International Organ Competition in Italy. He was organist at the Church of the Twelve Apostles in Vienna from 1974-1978.

He was conductor of the Vienna Boys' Choir from 1978-1984, leading one of the institution's four concert choirs (Mozartchor) in their weekly duties at the Imperial Court Chapel in Vienna. During this time he toured extensively with the choir throughout Europe, North and South America and South Africa, and prepared the choir for their duties at the Vienna Staatsoper, the Vienna Volksoper, as well as numerous concerts and recordings with the Vienna Philharmonic, the Vienna Symphony and Concentus Musicus Wien under Nikolaus Harnoncourt. In 1997 he returned to the choir as guest conductor, touring South Korea and the USA.

Since returning to Canada in 1984 he has been Director of Music at Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria and has been associated with the Victoria Symphony, Pacific Opera Victoria, the Victoria Choral Society, the Victoria Operatic Society, the Linden Singers and the Victoria Gilbert and Sullivan Society. He taught for twelve years at Glenlyon-Norfolk School. He is the director of the CapriCCio Vocal Ensemble which he founded in 1989.

Erica Johnson is a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts, Oberlin College, the Oberlin Conservatory, and the New England Conservatory. Her organ teachers have been John Mueller, Haskell Thomson, William Porter, and Harald Vogel. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the Eastman School of Music, where she studies with Hans Davidsson. With the assistance of a generous grant from the Frank Huntington Beebe Fund for Musicians in 2001, Erica investigated historical keyboard technique and instruments in Niedersachsen, Germany for two years. In August of 2002 she was awarded second prize in the Norddeutsche Rundfunk International Organ Competition, which was held in three rounds on the seventeenth-century organs of Basedow, Stade, and Norden. In November of 2004, she received the 2004 International Arp Schnitger Preis in Hamburg, Germany, from the Arp Schnitger Gesellschaft in recognition of her experience with these organs.

During the academic year 2004-05, Erica was named Westfield Scholar by the Westfield Center. Most recently, she completed the 2005-06 year as Visiting Instructor of Organ at the Oberlin Conservatory, designing and teaching a course in organ literature. Erica will continue teaching this subject at the Eastman School as a Graduate Instructor during 2006-07.