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GERRE HANCOCK

ORGANIST AND MASTER OF THE CHOIR
ST. THOMAS CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY

ORGAN CONCERT

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1979

3:30 P.M.

FIRST FEDERATED CHURCH
3601 N. Sheridan Road
Peoria, Illinois

Program

Choral in A Minor

CESAR FRANCK
1822-1890

The French master completed the Three Chorals during the last year of his life, and they show his personal idiom in its fullest maturity. Although not a hymn-tune, the chorale-tune itself is an original melody upon which the work as a whole is based. After an opening figural section which later assumes thematic importance, the chorale appears two times. A hauntingly beautiful Adagio then provides contrast. After intricate development of parts of both melodies, the chorale itself appears again complete, combined with the figuration of the beginning, and ends in a very bold and triumphant way.

Prelude and Fugue in E Minor

NICOLAUS BRUHNS
1665-1697

Bruhns, the North German composer, was a pupil of Buxtehude, whose marked influence is seen in Bruhns' works; the young Bach considered them models of composition. This work consists of several contrasting sections, many of them fugal, held together by rich Baroque-like fantasias.

Fantasia in G Major, BWV 572

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
1685-1750

The master's Fantasia is a composition of major proportions, and is thought to be an earlier work, for it shows distinct French influences. In three movements, it opens with a sparkling, toccata-like section that leads to a beautiful and flowing middle movement. This Alla Breve is reminiscent of a choral song in its stately legato quality and its marvelous use of suspensions. The closing movement, in which arpeggiated ascending chords are pitted against a descending bass line, provides an example of Bach in an exciting dramatic vein.

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Fantasia and Fugue on the Name
of Bach, Opus 46

MAX REGER
1873-1916

A native of Bavaria, Reger lived and worked in several important musical centers, and it was as a composer of organ music that he first became known. Arahamian says of him, "Although regarded in his day as a musical revolutionary, on account of his complicated harmonies and restless modulations, Reger was much more of a traditionalist than many of his contemporaries. His preoccupation with polyphony, his sense of musical architecture, and his ever proliferating harmonies, all point to roots in the music of Bach, even though his gifts sometimes run riot in immense exaggerations."

In German nomenclature, the note "B" is "B-flat", and the note "H" is "B-natural"; hence, the motto theme of this work. The Fantasia resembles a large-scaled improvisation, and is so marked by the composer. The motto is stated, developed, and exploited in every conceivable form, by augmentation and diminution, above, below, and in the midst of episodic material; it is a grandiose structure of florid finish. The Fugue is a double fugue; two complete, contrasting fugues each with its own distinct subject, are combined in a final fugue, which brings the work to a thrilling climax.

One of the more important organ works of the Romantic era, Reger's "BACH" is dedicated to Joseph Rheinberger. Of this masterpiece, Reger wrote, with characteristic modesty, "With this I have reached the absolute boundaries of harmonic and technical possibilities."

- Intermission -

IMPROVISATION ON SUBMITTED THEMES

1. Sonata-allegro
11. Song form
111. Fugue-Finale

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