

NAJI HAKIM

Organist

Wednesday, October 8, 2008

7:30 p.m.

Edythe Bates Old Recital Hall

and

Grand Organ

Alice Pratt Brown Hall

The Shepherd School of Music

Sponsored by the Rice University President's Lecture Series



RICE

César Franck: *Choral in A Minor*

Naji Hakim: *Glenalmond Suite*

INTERMISSION

Olivier Messiaen: *Dieu parmi nous*

Naji Hakim: *Salve regina*

Naji Hakim: *Aalaiki'ssalaam*

Improvisation

César Franck (1822-1890): *Choral in A Minor* (1890)

The three chorals for organ comprise the final opus by César Franck, in which the symphonic spirit, and expressive, melodic, and harmonic elements combine with the use of the colours of the French romantic organ of Cavaillé-Coll to offer some of the most popular work by the master of Sainte Clotilde. The Third Choral combines improvisatory gestures with homophonic textures to create a monumental climax to Franck's final work.

Naji Hakim (1955-): *Glenalmond Suite* (2007)

I. *Strommende* (Streaming)

II. *Favnende* (Embracing)

III. *Smilende* (Smiling)

IV. *Jublende* (Rejoicing)

For more information about *Glenalmond*, visit www.glenalmondcollege.co.uk

In the same way that a pastor has for his or her mission to gather the community, and go out, like the Good Shepherd, to find the sheep that have gone astray, the bell has for its mission to summon the faithful to the common Assembly, to reach out for the farthest ones, to wake up the dozing ones, and stimulate the indifferent. This suite is based on the Glenalmond chime. The music prolongs here the Christian symbolism of the bells to comment on biblical quotations referring to the Good Shepherd. The opening movement, *Strommende* (Streaming), develops the chime melody in a *cantabile* (singing) style, with a lively coda. In the second movement, *Favnende* (Embracing), the theme is articulated with ostinato figures and dark harmonic colour. The middle section, *scherzando*, prepares a clear diatonic recapitulation. *Smilende* (Smiling) is characterized by its light texture and Registration (flutes 4 and manuals alone). *Jublende* (Rejoicing) is a more developed movement combining sonata-rondo and variation forms.

"Now the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Hebrews 13:20-21

I. *Strommende* (Streaming)

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters." Psalm 23:1-2

II. *Favnende* (Embracing)

"If a man have a hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if it so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more over that sheep than over the ninety and nine which went not astray." Matthew 18:12-13

III. *Smilende* (Smiling)

"Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." Psalm 23:5

IV. *Jublende* (Rejoicing)

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Psalm 23: 6

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992): *Dieu parmi nous* (1935)

Dieu parmi nous is the last of a set of nine meditations for organ, *La Nativité du Seigneur*, which Messiaen composed in the summer of 1935. *La Nativité* is inspired by the mystery of the Incarnation, the presence of the eternal among us. The music represents successively, the descent of the Word, "the love for Jesus Christ of the communicant, of the Virgin, of the entire Church," and the joy of the Virgin. The musical language is characterized by irregular rhythms and Messiaen's own melodic/harmonic modes of limited transpositions.

Naji Hakim: *Salve Regina* (2004)

In his organ works, Naji Hakim often draws his thematic material from Gregorian chant, a musical "thesaurus" of the Roman Catholic Church and is grounded in the spirit of Vatican II. This paraphrase of the antiphon to the Virgin, *Salve Regina*, is based on the plainsong theme (solemn tone). The Gregorian line is unchanged; it evolves slowly above an expressive harmony. The text of the prayer is underlined by the meditative, soft, and peaceful character.

Naji Hakim: *Aalaiki'ssalaam* (2006) (*Variations on a Lebanese theme*)

This work is inspired by the tragic events that occurred in the Middle East, and particularly in Lebanon, in the summer of 2006, and strives to be a testimony of Peace and Joy. It follows the theological and musical line of another work of the composer, *Die Taube*[1], and echoes Pastor Hanne Margrethe Tougaard's preface for this same work: "*Lad Guds melodi klinge i jer og lede jeres fodder ind på fredens vej*" (Let God's melody resound in you and guide your feet into the way of peace). *Aalaiki'ssalaam*, "Peace be with you," is a Marian Maronite melody developed here in a set of seven variations. The first variation is a joyful melismatic ornamentation in contrasted modes. Variations 2 and 3 proceed by rhythmic ostinato or aksak rhythm (3+3+2) around harmonic frames of the melody; they are linked to a powerful and dark *Marcia* (Variation 4). An expressive harmonization in the center of the work

(Variation 5) is followed by a joyful arpeggio. Variation 7 is articulated in three sections, progressing from an initial habanera, through a tonal, rhythmic and dynamic gradation, to burst out in the brilliant and cheerful coda.

[1] *Die Taube* (Ed. Schott) exists in three versions: 1. for tenor and string quartet, 2. for tenor and string orchestra, 3. for tenor and organ.

Naji Subhy Paul Irénée Hakim was born in Beirut on October 31, 1955. He studied organ with J. Langlais and at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris in the classes of R. Boutry, J.-C. Henry, M. Bitsch, R. Falcinelli, J. Castèrède and S. Nigg, in which he was awarded seven first prizes. He is a licentiate teacher in organ from Trinity College of Music in London and won nine first prizes at international organ and composition competitions. In 1991 he was awarded the Prix André Caplet by the Académie des Beaux-Arts. He served as organist of the Basilique du Sacré-Coeur in Montmartre, Paris, from 1985 until 1993, and then became titular organist of l'église de la Trinité, succeeding Olivier Messiaen, from 1993 until 2008. He is professor of music analysis at the Conservatoire National de Région de Boulogne-Billancourt and visiting professor at the Royal Academy of Music, London. Dr. Hakim is a graduate of the École Nationale Supérieure des Télécommunications in Paris, a member of the Consociation Internationalis Musicae Sacrae in Rome, and Doctor honoris causa of the University Saint-Esprit of Kaslik, Lebanon. In 2007, His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, awarded Naji Hakim the Insignia Augustae Crucis Insigne Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice, for his excellent commitment and work for the benefit of the Church and the Holy Father. His works include instrumental music (organ, flute, bassoon, horn, trumpet, harp, guitar, violin, and piano), symphonic music (*Les Noces de l'Agneau*, *Hymne de l'Univers*, *Ouverture Libanaise*, *Påskeblomst*, four organ concertos, and a violin concerto), and vocal music (oratorio *Saul de Tarse*, cantata *Phèdre*, *Magnificat*, and three masses).
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