

French Fireworks

Organ Concert



Sunday, May 4, 2014

Arthur Wenk, organist

Program Notes

Program

March on a Theme by Handel	Alexandre Guilmant
Plein Jeu, Duo	Louis-Nicolas Clérambault
Chorale in E Major	César Franck
Trio, Basse de Cromorne	Clérambault
Finale from Symphony No. 2	Charles Widor
Flûtes, Récit de Nazard	Clérambault
Sortie in E Flat	Louis Lefébure-Wély
Caprice sur les Grands Jeux	Clérambault
Final from Symphony No. 1	Louis Vierne

César Franck (1822-1890) may be considered the father of French symphonic organ music. Fully exploiting the resources of the great Romantic instruments of Aristide Cavaillé-Col, the most distinguished organ builder of the nineteenth century, Franck set the ambitious goal of composing works for the organ that would rival orchestral symphonies. Frank's three chorales for organ stand among the finest compositions for that instrument in the nineteenth century. Following Franck's example, Charles Widor (1844-1937) and Louis Vierne (1870-1937) each wrote large multi-movement organ works that they called symphonies.

Interspersed with these virtuoso pieces are the movements making up the Suite du Deuxieme Ton of Nicolas Clérambault (1676-1749), who served as organist at the church of Saint-Sulpice in Paris, a position later held by Charles Widor.