

Music, She Wrote: Organ Compositions by Women

Part Six: Non-seasonal Service Music

by Dr. Frances Nobert, South Coast District Convener

Mary Jeanne van Appledorn. *Variations on “Jerusalem the Golden,”* ed. Wayne C. Hobbs. Vivace VIV 336. The first part of the composition is in common time and consists of a big crescendo during the presentation of two stanzas of the hymn. Verse one is homophonic with the melody on the top. The second stanza features the tune in the pedal with an accompaniment of fifths, thirds and fourths in an eighth-note pattern in the manuals. *Toccata* switches to three beats in a measure with the melody in augmentation in the pedal and fast broken chords or scalar patterns in the manuals. This final variation concludes with a coda with full organ. The moderately difficult composition is in Db Major with a number of accidentals. Appledorn supplies registrations throughout.

Jennifer Bate. *Introduction and Variations on an Old French Carol (Picardy)*. Novello 01 0176 01. Bate has created an introduction and five variations on this well-known melody. A variety of styles, tempi and volumes occur before the full-blown fugue appears in the final variation. The work roars to a close as the tuba states the last phrase of the melody. Bate provides registration suggestions throughout.

Marilyn Biery. *Meditations on the Love of God*. MorningStar MSM 10-949. Biery has selected three texts, the first of which is from Jeremiah 29: 13-14 and is the composer’s personal reflection on the love of God. The second is a musical rendition of the story of Lazarus (John 11: 1-40) with the various Biblical passages indicated throughout the score. The final meditation uses cryptography to spell the title, *Be still, and know that I am God* (Psalm 46: 10). The short first and third works would be very effective during meditation or communion, while the longer middle setting would be a stirring prelude.

Roberta Bitgood. *On an Ancient Alleluia* from *The Roberta Bitgood Album*. H.W. Gray 6B00675. The composition opens with a melody from a 16th-century manuscript that a friend discovered in a shop near Notre Dame in Paris. As the volume increases, a new chordal pattern appears in the right hand against a second melody in the the left hand. The work concludes with a *ff* toccata with part of the original melody in augmentation in the pedal.

Roberta Bitgood. *Chorale Prelude on “God Himself Is With Us”* from *The Roberta Bitgood Organ Album*. H. W. Gray GB00675. This jaunty chorale prelude emulates the style of J. S. Bach with a walking eighth-note bass in the left hand, a recurring sixteenth-note motive in the right hand and a conservative harmonic style. The chorale phrases appear in the pedal and are separated by brief manual interludes.

Emma Lou Diemer. *Glory and Praise: Familiar Praise and Worship songs for Organ*. Sacred Music Press 70/1328 S. Diemer has set *He is Lord, Lord be Glorified, Spirit of the Living God, Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus, Praise Him! Praise Him!, God is so Good* and *Jesus, You’re Worthy of Praise*. The moderately easy arrangements are from three to five pages long and would be appropriate for preludes, offertories or communion music.

Emma Lou Diemer. *Psalm 145* from *Seasonal Psalms for Organ, Volume 2*. Sacred Music Press 70/1259 S. This work of praise is based on Psalm 145, which begins “I will exalt you, O God my King, and bless your Name for ever and ever.” Diemer uses chords, runs, quartal harmonies and arpeggios, shifting meters and full organ until the final page. The work closes with a gradual decrescendo, a repeated right-hand motif and a left-hand chordal pattern reminiscent of the opening. The conclusion is a single pianissimo high f.

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel. *Prelude for Organ*. Vivace Press VIV 304. Hensel composed this grand six-page, F-Major, homophonic prelude for her wedding processional.

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel. *Prelude for Organ in G Major* from **Organ Works in G major**, ed. Calvert Johnson. Vivace Press VIV 329. Hensel penned the five-page composition the night before her wedding, because the promised work from her brother Felix did not arrive. The style, which Hensel describes as conservative, is stately with an opening section featuring massive chords and alternations between manuals. A fugato appears in measure fourteen and alternates with the opening material before a series of slow, diminished chords closes the piece.

Alice Jordan. ***A Season and A Time: Organ Preludes: General, Christmas, Easter, Lord's Supper.*** Broadman Press 4570-37. Most of the compositions are moderately easy and are three to four pages in length. The general contents include *Jubilate (Madrid)*, *Canonic Voluntary on "Dix," Prayer (Sweet Hour)*, *Processional on an Old English Melody (All is Well)*, *Fanfare and Trumpet Tune (Hendon and Austrian Hymn)*, *Adoration on a Traditional English Melody (Terra Patris)* and *The Lord is My Shepherd (Dominus Regit Me and Bradbury)*. Appropriate for the Lord's Supper are *Communion on Two American Folk Hymns (Balm in Gilead and Break Bread)*, *Prayer* and *The Lord is My Shepherd*.

Kristina Langlois. ***5 Hymns of Praise (Cantad al Senor, Noël nouvelet, O Store Gud, Engelberg and Pleading Savior)***. MorningStar MSM 10-722. Especially effective are the first three of this set. *Cantad al Senor* employs a swingy rhythm and an ornamented melody for the Brazilian folk tune. *Noël nouvelet* explores many possibilities of the first four melody notes in tonic and dominant keys through use of a canon and an ostinato. *O Store Gud (How Great Thou Art)* is a quiet setting with the accompaniment in compound time and the melody in duplets above.

Janet Linker. ***Variations on "How Firm a Foundation."*** Concordia Publishing House 97-6586. Linker uses the key of Ab Major for *Hymn, Pastorale, Trumpet Tune, Chorale, Duo, Trio, Allegro, Reverie* and *Finale*. Registrations are indicated throughout. Each moderately easy variation could stand alone or be combined with others for a church service or a concert.

Janet Linker. ***Variations on "O Waly, Waly" (The Gift of Love or When Love is Found)***. Concordia Publishing House 97-6796. Linker's settings are from one to four pages long and include a variety of styles, tempi and colorful registrations. J. S. Bach's *Wachet auf* motif appears in Variation IV, while a gentle, swinging blues occurs in Variation VI. It is possible to play one or more of this delightful set, since each variation is convincing as a free-standing composition.

Benna Moe. *Finale pomposo festivo* from ***Koncert-Suite für Orgel***. eriks K631. This third and final movement is a four-page, full-organ, chordal composition in ABA form. At least two manuals are required for the middle section, which contains an eighth-note accompanying passage in the left hand. It would be an excellent postlude.

Maria Theresia von Paradis. ***Sicilienne*** (Eb Major), trans. Charles Callahan. Morning Star MSM 10-903. Also available for flute and keyboard in G Major from Editions Billaudot through Theodore Presser. *Sicilienne* is an andantino, duple compound work with a beautiful right-hand melody over slow-moving harmony in the left hand and pedal. It is versatile in length because of the possible repeats of both the A and B sections. It also may feature a beautiful solo stop for the melody.

Emily Maxson Porter. ***All Depends on Our Possessing: 6 Variations*** (based on *Alles ist an Gottes Segen* by Johann Löhner). MorningStar MSM 10-727. At the beginning of each of the six short variations is a portion of the text to indicate the idea expressed by the music. Porter gives the registrations, which are delightful smaller sounds, except for the final stanza, which calls for a fuller sound with a mixture. Because there is no pedal, the composition might be learned at the piano and easily transferred to the organ.

Emily Maxson Porter. ***Celebrations of Praise: Seven Chorale Preludes for Organ (Ebenezer, Hanover, Lobe den Herren, Terra Patris, St. Denio, Schönster Herr Jesu and Royal Oak)***. Calfaria Music 99-101. This delightful collection could be used for various parts of the service or for concert. Several of the works are rhythmically catchy with polymeters or shifting meters.

Emily Maxson Porter. ***Five Organ Preludes on Nineteenth-Century Hymn Tunes (Hankey, How Can I Keep from Singing, Maryton, Toplady and Walton)***. Calfaria Music 00-201. Except for *How Can I Keep*

from *Singing*, the short settings call for small, colorful registrations and would be delightful as preludes or for communion.

Emily Maxson Porter. ***For All the Faithful: Six New Organ Settings*** (*For All the Faithful Women, My Hope is Built on Nothing Less, Thine Is the Glory, Weary of All Trumpeting He Leadeth Me: Oh, Blessed Thought!* and *Mothering God, You Gave me Birth*). Augsburg Fortress 11-11081. Many of the melodies are possibly unfamiliar, or the settings are too concert-like. However, the subdued but colorful *He Leadeth Me* would be a very effective prelude.

Emily Maxson Porter. ***Partita on "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven" (Lauda Anima)***. MorningStar MSM 10 714. The composition includes *Fanfare* ("Praise, my soul, the King of heaven..."), *Dance* ("Praise him for his grace and favor..."), *Pastorale* ("Tenderly he shields and spares us...") and *Jubilation* ("Angels help us to adore him..."). The only quiet movement, *Pastorale*, creates a swingy feeling with shifts between two and three beats per measure. The melody enters subtly following an extended introduction or rather lengthy interludes. *Dance* and *Jubilation* are joyful, perpetual motion pieces in the manuals, with the melody appearing in the pedal. *Fanfare* is a stately opening with the melody rhythmically presented on the right hand on a Trompette en chamade. Full organ opens the movement and accompanies the reed tune until the end.

Emily Maxson Porter. ***Organ Music for the Temple: Five Jewish Hymns***. Warner Brothers Publications EL96124. Except for the chaconne, the compositions vary in length from four to six pages. *Hatikva* is tri-part with a joyful duo, a canon and a march. The eleven-page chaconne, *Father, Hear the Prayer We Offer*, begins quietly with an eight-measure theme. Porter explores many rhythmic and melodic possibilities. The composition builds to full organ in the middle and retreats to the quiet registration in the final two thematic presentations and in the coda. *Ein Adir* is a clever Triptych (ABA') featuring the melody in mostly quarter notes in the beginning, in augmentation in the center, and in canon at the fourth in the A' section. The work repeats much of the opening as it leads to a brief coda. *Ata Echad* has five varied settings of the theme and ends with a coda for manuals only. *Shomeir Yisraeil* begins softly with the right-hand melody and a simple accompaniment. During the middle section, the right hand explores ornamentations of the theme. The melody returns exactly as in the beginning, but with with more activity in the left hand .

Emily Maxson Porter. ***Short Settings of Jewish Hymns for Organ*** . Warner Brothers Publications EL96125. This collection contains excellent service music. Of the fifteen pieces, thirteen are one page or shorter. Seven have two or three settings for one verse, while the lengthier *Shalom Aleichem* and *Shomeir Yisraeil* include several stanzas. Many are for manuals only.

Emily Maxson Porter. ***Three Quiet Hymn Settings*** (*Beautiful Savior, Children of the Heavenly Father* and *When Peace, Like a River*). MorningStar MSM-10-864. Each of these three- to four-page compositions would be lovely for a prelude or for communion. The unadorned melody appears either in the soprano or the tenor. Registration suggestions occur throughout.

Clara Schumann. ***Prelude and Fugue in G minor, op. 16, no. 1***, edited by Joachim Dorfmüller. Furore-Edition 122. Opus 16 contains three preludes and fugues for piano composed in 1845, the same year Robert Schumann produced six fugues on B-A-C-H for organ. The contrapuntal practices of J. S. Bach and the harmonic influences of Felix Mendelssohn are evident in this opus. The lyrical romantic-style prelude stands in strong contrast to the baroque rhythmical drive of the fugue.

Clara Schumann. ***Prelude and Fugue in D minor, op. 16, no. 3***, ed. Barbara Harbach. Vivace Press, VIV 305. (See *op. 16* above.) Although the work was originally for piano, it is aptly suited for organ with the chordal prelude and with the fugue, which has pedal points and a characteristic fugal theme.

Jeanne Shaffer. ***Partita on "Schmücke Dich" (Deck Thyself, My Soul, with Gladness)***. Company Press. The variations are based on Johann Crüger's well-known melody of 1649. Although the complete hymn

has nine verses, Jeanne Shaffer chose to set four to achieve musical contrast and to complement the text. The work was composed in 1970 at the request of Sam Batt Owens, who premiered it at St. George's Episcopal Church in Nashville that year.

Julia. Smith. *Prelude in D Flat*. Mowbray Music Publishers MM-108. Theodore Presser Company, sole Distributor. The lush, four-page work requires a romantic-style instrument with strings, flutes and an effectively programmed crescendo pedal. The form is ABA with an eight-measure coda. The center section features many duplets against triplets in C# minor.

Elizabeth Turner. *Air* from *Music by Women before 1800: Music for Weddings, Joyous Ceremonies and Special Occasions, with Optional Descants for Trumpet, Violin, Flute, or Oboe*. Ars Femina 40257. Because Turner's musical education was acquired in a milieu dominated by George Frideric Handel, this lovely, two-page composition is typical of many of the period's slower works. The ornamented melody is supported by simple left-hand harmonies and by constant pulsing quarter notes in the pedal.

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