

## *Suggestions for Performance*

The ten compositions gathered into this collection are art music written on two staves for hands only and, while quite effective when performed on larger instruments, are specially geared to be played on the one manual pipe organ with or without pedals, the stage piano with digital pipe organ samples aboard, or the harmonium (reed organ). They are of average difficulty and call for legato technique punctuated with other types of touch where indicated in the score or when deemed appropriate by the performer. While these pieces would make for effective recital and lesson material a place also may be found for each of them somewhere in the worship service where they may serve as preludes, offertories, postludes, or for dedication ceremonies.

In performing these works it will be incumbent upon the performer to make mental adjustments to the score, if necessary, so the music makes it for the listener. As with any organ music some experimentation may be needed in order to bring out best what's written on the page. In very wet acoustics the organist will need to play a little slower and more detached to keep things clear. In dry acoustics the rests between detached chords may need to be shortened more and the chords held longer than their written values. The fundamental pulse is to be retained, but variations in tempo can and should be introduced at appropriate places to nuance the music and keep it from sounding mechanical. Such places have been marked in the scores. Prolonged held notes also may require reiteration at the beginning of every other bar when performed at the piano to keep these tones sounding.

Tempo marks corresponding to beats per minute also have been included, with the crotchet (quarter note) receiving one beat and descriptive terms written in the universal musical language of Italian. These are relative only and should be understood as broad approximations to be used as a guide which, like all tempo marks, may not be appropriate in every circumstance due to the personal interpretations of performers, the way the instrument at hand responds, and especially, the way its sound lingers in its own acoustical environment. The feeling aroused by the harmonic structure of the music will be the true source of correct tempo in any given situation, thus performers are apt to find their tempo mark in the composition itself rather than in the

instructions at the beginning.

Markings for tempi appear as follows:

Quarter note = 162-182 -- Vivace  
142-161 -- Allegro molto  
120-141 -- Allegro  
100-119 -- Allegretto  
80- 99 -- Moderato  
60- 79 -- Andante  
42- 59 -- Adagio  
30- 41 -- Lento

The 4 part writing found in these 10 pieces is in standard short score (2 staff) notated with treble and bass clefs. Voice lines in these pieces are never permitted to cross. Save for Op. 2, a work written entirely in keyboard style, voice ranges are never exceeded. These 10 works stay within the following voice ranges:

Top (treble) staff:

Soprano voice – middle C to high A (1<sup>st</sup> line above staff)

Alto voice – tenor G to D (4<sup>th</sup> line)

Bottom (bass) staff:

Tenor voice – tenor D to middle G

Bass – bass (low) C to middle E

In these works the compass of the bass voice is extended downward to low C.

In this music the stretch for the hands is kept at an octave or less, and registration suggestions along with indications for hand division are included with the scores. The choice of stops and couplers will depend as always upon personal taste and the musician's ear based upon what is available. This is music for the hands, but if the instrument at hand is supplied with pedals the bass voice may be assigned to the feet as with ordinary 4-part hymn playing with the highest notes in the second octave of the pedalboard transposed an octave lower, if desired, for added sonority. Suboctave (16-foot) manual stops with good blending qualities, if not too assertive, may be drawn and included with the choruses to provide gravity. If the instrument happens to be equipped with any Pedal to Manual couplers, then these may be used with advantage especially for climactic passages.

**The two majestic Op. 1 Sketches in F Major and Bb Major, Numbers 1 and 2 respectively, open this collection. These short pieces each make use of a theme, one of a great many, offered by Louis Vierne to his organ pupils for improvisation upon a single free theme. Both compositions are made up of 3 phrases in the major key separated by 2 intervening periods in the minor key, making them identical in form. They are thus a matched pair and can serve the same purpose in a worship service or for instruction. The phrases found in each one are harmonized in major mode but are twice interrupted by contrasting periods in minor mode where the melody lines are taken from one of the middle voices of the previous phrase. Both pieces also are written in 4 voice texture, and both end in 6 voices. Either Sketch, when performed with the full organ with the bass line transferred to the pedal and transposed an octave lower where feasible, makes for an effective and powerful postlude which exploits more fully the downward sonorities of the instrument. Depending upon the musical requirements at hand they also are flexible enough to be performed effectively in a more relaxed and melodic mood using a less strong registration or even with quiet foundations employing a Celeste stop for the concluding passages, with or without pedal.**

**The D Major Op. 2 Recessional treats a rousing hymn-like theme in 4 voice texture in “keyboard style” without observing voice range limits and incorporates many of the same compositional devices as its companion piece, the Eb Major Op. 3 Processional March. These two pieces have in fact interchangeable use depending upon the time requirement: Op. 2, although written in simple triple time, works as a processional when the aisle is shorter, and, conversely, when the aisle is longer, Op. 3 will work as a recessional. This work in D Major, without observing voice range limits, presents a 16-bar theme made up of 4 phrases of 4 bars each and beginning in the soprano which is then harmonized in 4 parts. The theme is then inverted and repeated in the relative key (b minor) with each phrase broken in half and alternated between the hands. A section of 8 bars follows in the dominant key (A Major) which presents the first half of the theme as a 2-part canon at the octave. This leads to a short development of 14 bars in the subdominant key (G Major) in which the texture drops to a single voice and, one by one, all 4 voices reenter in quasi-fugato style. This leads to a dominant pedal point in the bass with the theme returning in the soprano, this time harmonized using chromatic planing. The coda intrudes during the last phrase of the theme, and the work finishes with great finality in 7 voices over the full power of the instrument. A**

very strong, pervading bass should be supplied for this coda, either with the suboctave coupler drawn and/or with 16-foot manual stops coupled to the main manual or, if the instrument has pedals, assigning the bass voice to the pedal and drawing a big Pedal registration. If the instrument at hand has a Bass coupler (Pedal to Great, or Automatic Pedal) which couples the Pedal stops to the lowest note played on the main manual, that control may be drawn with advantage. The tempo of this piece should not be too fast as substitutions across larger finger stretches are demanded to maintain a legato. This will automatically set certain technical bounds to speed.

The Eb Major Op. 3 Processional March, as its name implies, is a majestic march with another rousing theme. This work written in 4 parts presents a theme made up of 4 phrase of 4 bars each which appears first in the soprano voice. A pair of 2-part canons at the octave based upon the 1<sup>st</sup> phrase of the theme then follows, in c minor and F Major, respectively, which leads to a section which inverts the theme and shares it between voices. A short fugato section in Db Major based upon rhythmic transformation of the theme (same pitches in succession, different note values) is then presented which leads to a dominant pedal point. Following a slight pause the theme is then repeated in the soprano in the home key and harmonized using chromatic planing. The coda which follows includes a held tonic chord in the right hand approached from a major chord on the mediant scale degree and a virtuoso descending chromatic scale over 2 octaves in the bass. The final tonic chord in 8 voices over the full power of the instrument is reiterated to bring this music to a resounding conclusion. This, as stated, is a companion piece to the previous one, uses many of the same contrapuntal devices, and passes through 3 related keys and 3 unrelated keys before returning finally to the home key.

The C Major Op. 4 Variations on a cantus firmus is an extended work dedicated to the memory of world class theatre organist Don Baker. Not surprisingly, it consists of a Baker's dozen (13) variations on a single fixed theme or cantus firmus (c.f.) preceded by a related fanfare-like introduction. Written with an eye to symmetry and proportion rather than tape-measure size, its construction is built around a central grouping of 8 variations (3<sup>rd</sup> thru 10<sup>th</sup>, each alternating a related key with the home key) equally flanked on both sides by the remaining musical material. The c.f. is first introduced in 4-part harmony in the soprano voice. The pair of variations which follow remain in the home key and are 2-part canons at the octave which take turns

switching out the follower and leader, first in 3-part texture and then in 4-parts. Beginning with the 3<sup>rd</sup> variation the music modulates through nearly related keys which are distributed only on odd-numbered variations (3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>). These are separated by even-numbered variations (4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>) which return the music to the home key. The c.f. is altered rhythmically and broken up and divided between the voices in some of these, and in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> variations it dissolves into figuration. The home key returns again in the 10<sup>th</sup> variation which presents another 2-part canon at the octave harmonized in 3 parts, only this time the c.f. and its inverse are the follower and leader, respectively. In the less tricky 11<sup>th</sup> variation which ensues the inverse of the c.f. is introduced in the right hand against a series of running notes in the left hand, the last half of which moves into the parallel key (c minor). The 12<sup>th</sup> variation, a 4-voice fugato written in quadruple counterpoint, restores the home key and presents a new subject having 3 countersubjects, the first of which is the c.f. in inverse movement. Because it starts on the 3<sup>rd</sup> scale degree this new subject has a tail pointing to the dominant and is supplied with a tonal answer. In this 12<sup>th</sup> variation there is a modulation from the home key to the subdominant (F Major) after which it all comes to a complete stop on a big Neapolitan 6<sup>th</sup> chord. In the last (13<sup>th</sup>) variation the c.f. is fully harmonized in 4 parts in the parallel key employing chromatic planing. In the short coda which follows there is a momentary return to the subdominant key. These final bars, over the full power of the organ, combine the new subject presented in the 12<sup>th</sup> variation with the first 3 notes of the c.f. The piece ends on an orchestral unison spanning 4 octaves of keys with the full power of the instrument by means of a sudden turn into the home key. This music presents an opportunity for organists to display the color possibilities of the stops of the instrument at hand, its home key being deliberately selected to exploit to the fullest the downward sonorities of the instrument.

The Bb Major Op. 5 Andantino was written in homage to and in memory of Louis Vierne, titular organist 1900-1937 of the Cathedral of Notre-dame de Paris whose many worldwide pupils came to France to study organ and improvisation with him. This is a dreamy piece written in the same 6-part form for improvising on a single free theme that Vierne taught to his students and which he adapted and exemplified in his 24 Pieces en style libre Op. 31. The theme for this work was derived by rhythmic transformation (same notes, different note values) of the cantus firmus from Op. 4 by inverting the major 6<sup>th</sup> upward leap in the melodic outline of the latter to a downward minor 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**This piece is scored for light foundation stops with String Celeste tone reserved for the final entry of the theme. How it was put together in general, and its development in particular, will repay careful study. The irregular phrase lengths, triplet rhythms within a constant duple time, preference for the mediant key in the 2<sup>nd</sup> entry of the theme, modulations to distant keys, deliberate parallel perfect 5ths woven into the inner voice harmony in 4 places (bars 8, 30, 39-40, 47), final reentry of the theme employing a 2-part canon at the octave, chromatic inflections in the coda – ALL are very reminiscent of Vierne’s methods and vocabulary.**

**The D Major Op. 6 Fugue a la gigue written in triple counterpoint is a brisk, exuberant, rhythmic 4 voice dance fugue with 2 countersubjects whose subject is also derived by rhythmic transformation of the main theme of Op. 4. The subject begins on scale degree 1, is supplied with a real answer in the dominant, and retains the same large upward leap of a major 6<sup>th</sup> in its melodic outline. A 4-voice keyboard fugue for hands only like this one presents an additional challenge when there is a large leap in the subject, and this challenge was met primarily by tweaking the free voice. How this tweaking was done repays careful study. This music proceeds at a quick pace, requires a full sound, ends in 6 voices with a “stinger” (a sharply detached final tonic chord on a strong beat), and is fun to play and listen to. It’s also a toe-tapping crowd pleaser with wide audience appeal particularly well suited as a postlude on a joyous feast day or for an encore at a recital.**

**The G Major Op. 7 Voluntary is a short 4 voice work inspired by familiar models of the same name left to us by the old English masters of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The organ Voluntary has developed and evolved over several centuries, and the term “voluntary” perhaps originated from the organist improvising freely “at will.” In 18<sup>th</sup> century England the Voluntary was quite different in style to that of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and often consisted of 2 or more short, contrasted sections or movements. The English organs of the period were also very different and often had no pedal department. This work for hands only is a fughetta or short fugue which in this case has a rhythmic subject and 3 countersubjects which undergo rapid development with almost no episodic material, all of which is preceded by a brief, slow introduction ending on a half cadence. This work, while its structure by comparison is a bit more simplified, should not be confused with the so-called “simple fugue” which by definition lacks a countersubject. Its subject was derived from**

rhythmic transformation of the tenor line from Op. 8. It begins on scale degree 1, has a final note which points to the dominant key, and is provided with a tonal answer. Entries which follow the exposition are tonally limited merely to subdominant (C Major) and relative (e minor) keys before the final entry is made in the home key. This work is singular in that the only time the subject appears in the bass is all by itself when the piece begins, after which the countersubjects take turns entering in the bass with each entry. The piece is thus written in triple rather than quadruple counterpoint, and a short coda ending in 6 voices rounds out the piece. It is suitable for when the organist need not play a long time but still may need a short prelude or postlude which begins quietly and ends rhythmically.

The G Major Op. 8 Diapason Movement takes its name from many similar works by the old English masters and is scored for light 8-foot Principal tone with the Unda Maris possibly added. Written in 4 voices throughout, it incorporates a 2-part canon at the octave built upon the tenor line of the harmony. This is a thin textured, very subdued, and peaceful work, easy to read and easy to play, instructive for pianists who are moving to the organ, yet useful in the worship service. It is well suited as a short prelude for general use any day of the liturgical year and may also serve as a shorter offertory when needed.

The d minor Op. 9 Chorale which concludes this collection was also employed as the central slow movement of the Op. 10 Praeludium, Chorale, & Fugue Op. 10 in the same key which opens the 2<sup>nd</sup> collection. It was written first and published separately to preserve its autonomy while at the same time allow it to exist inside another work, further honoring the dedicatee whose habit it often was to repackage his own previously composed music in a new work. It is constructed in a rondo (ABABA) form and makes use of 2 themes, the 1<sup>st</sup> of which is introduced as an unaccompanied bass solo, then in the soprano harmonized in 3 voice texture. The entire work to which this Chorale belongs is built around a 9 note figure based upon the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 notes of the d minor scale, and this same melodic curve is reflected in the Chorale's 1<sup>st</sup> theme. A 2<sup>nd</sup> theme is then introduced in the soprano, still in 3 voices, after which the 1<sup>st</sup> theme reenters as a 2-part canon at the octave between the outer voices in 4 voice texture. This is followed by a passage in 4 voices where the 2<sup>nd</sup> theme reenters in the soprano. Here the tempo increases gradually, the music becomes more agitated, then falls off gradually to a single, very slow

**line before the 2<sup>nd</sup> theme completely finishes. The music resumes in the parallel major key during which the 2 themes are combined in 5 voices using a Celeste stop. The piece then closes very quietly. Owing to the fact that many instruments are built with the downward range of Celeste ranks ending at tenor C, the parts for the left hand in this passage stay within this limit. When this Chorale is being performed by itself one would not play the ensuing 4 voice bridge section which leads to the ensuing Op. 10 Fugue (further particulars about this bridge section may be found in the notes to the 2<sup>nd</sup> collection). Performers will find this to be an effective stand alone piece having a variety of uses.**

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