



## *“Music for a Sacred Space”*

Organ Concert

Thursday, May 18th, 6:30 pm

Timothy and Nancy LeRoi Nickel, organists

Thomas Busse, cantor

*The music in this program is primarily set for two organists on one instrument employing four hands and four feet. The origins of this unique corner of the repertory go back in time to Arnolt Schlick (ca. 1455-1521) who wrote the first German treatise on organ building and playing in 1511. Although blind, he claimed to be able to play four voice lines in the pedal in his verset on a chant celebrating Christ's Ascension. Many scholars believe this was actually the first piece intended for two players at one instrument. This performance date, May 18th, 2023 is Ascension Day.*

**Ascendo ad patrem meum**

**Arnold Schlick**

*The widely-performed Chicago composer Frank Ferko (born in 1950) wrote his set of five pieces with inspiration from the Basilica of St. Madeleine on a Burgundian hilltop in Vézeley, France from which St. Bernard famously “preached the second crusade” on Palm Sunday in 1146. The 12th-century Romanesque architectural masterpiece with stunning stone carved tympani and column capitals was designed with light in mind, so that, at the equinox, the light from the south-side windows falls in a line down the center aisle. Mr. Ferko translates this light and space into music using the Antiphon Dedit Dominus from the Feast of St. Bernard (August 20th).*

**L'espace de lumière**

**Frank Ferko**

*Two early 19th-century organ duets divide the three 21st-century pieces on this program. In June of 1828, the two friendly Franzes—Schubert and Lachner, hiked to the convent of Heiligenkreutz near Vienna to try out a famous organ in the monastery’s chapel. At an inn the night before their visit, each composer wrote a fugue to be simply played, as Lachner wrote, “in the presence of several of the monks.”*

**Introduction and Fugue in D Minor**

**Franz Lachner**

*The 500-year old parish church of St. Rémy in the Normandy port city of Dieppe, France has a wonderfully devilish host of gargoyles ringing its exterior. The musical portrayals of these characters will be accompanied by photos of the gargoyles and site-recordings of the sea gulls and passers-by at the church where Nancy’s Famille LeRoi worshiped for generations. Timothy and Nancy were able to gain access to the beautifully restored historic 1739 Claude Parisot organ in July 2022 to try out this original composition by Mr. Nickel. (The final gargoyle image to be shown looks rather like a monk and may have been listening, approvingly.) This presentation is the U.S. premiere of the composition.*

**The Gargoyles of St. Rémy**

**Timothy Nickel**

**Fugue in E Minor**

**Franz Schubert**

*Naji Hakim (born in 1955) is a Lebanese-French composer who succeeded Olivier Messaien as organist at the church of La Trinité in Paris. Published in 2011, the work is a set of fourteen short, contemporary meditations on the wood engravings of Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472-1553). The twelve apostles are framed by Der Heiland (Christ) and Der heilige Paulus (St. Paul). In addition to projecting the Cranach images, photos of the Apostles from St. Mark’s rose window located in the rear of the nave above the organ will be illuminated. Hakim uses ancient hymns and Gregorian chant melodies associated with each character to reflect on the grandeur, resignation, transcendence, and frenetic activity of the saints.*

**The Apostles, Meditations on engravings of Lucas Cranach the Elder**

**Naji Hakim**

—Timothy & Nancy LeRoi Nickel