

Music at the Basilica Inc.

Advent Organ Recital 2020

Tom Healey – organ

Mr Purcell's Procession

June Nixon (pub.1994)

June Nixon was Organist and Director of the Choir at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne for 40 years. She remains a prolific and popular composer of organ and choral music, published in the UK and the USA. The Choir of King's College, Cambridge is among those who have performed her works.

Concerto in D Minor (Largo/Allegro) (BWV 565)

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

transcribed for organ by JS Bach (1685-1750, Germany)

Bach arranged sixteen of Vivaldi's concertos for clavier (harpsichord), including three for organ, in 1713-1714, during his time in Weimar. They reflect his interest in Italian music, especially Vivaldi's.

Bach started work in Weimar in 1703 as a violinist before his appointment as ducal chapel organist, and then also as court orchestra concertmaster. He came across the music of Vivaldi, Albinoni and others, as people brought the scores back from Italy. He also transcribed a concerto by the young Prince Johann Ernst of Weimar (who died at the age of 19).

Suite No. 1 (Air and Toccato)

Florence Price (1887-1953)

Florence Price was born in Little Rock, Arkansas. She graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music and in 1910 became head of the music department at Clark University, Atlanta, and married Thomas Price, a distinguished lawyer. When they settled in Chicago, she established herself as an organist, concert pianist, teacher and acclaimed composer. She became the first African-American woman to have an orchestral work performed by a major American orchestra. When asked to discuss the African-American characteristics of many of her compositions, she said, "It is intended to be Negroid in character and expression." The Toccato (sic) incorporates elements of the Juba, a dance originally brought to South Carolina by Congolese slaves.

Wachet Auf

JS Bach (1685-1750)

This is one of Bach's best known works after the Toccata in D Minor. It is an exact 'copy' of the fourth movement of the cantata of the same name.

Carillon de Westminster

Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

This piece, with its theme based on the famous melody of the bells of Westminster, London, was dedicated by the composer to the great British organ builder, Henry Willis. He was a great and prolific composer in the symphonic organ style. In his 37th year as organist of Notre Dame, the cathedral decided to end his regular organ concerts. On the 2nd of June, Vierne was playing his 1750th and final recital. He was not a well man and 3 packets of cigarettes a day didn't help. As he started an improvisation, he said to his assistant, Maurice Duruflé, "I'm going to be sick". Then the audience heard a low sustained pedal note and Vierne succumbed to a heart attack. His wish to die at the organ was granted!

TOM HEALEY directs the Vox Angelica Geelong Chamber Choir and is Organist and Choir Director at St Paul's Anglican Church, Geelong. He is on the board of the Australian Youth Classical Music Competition and President of Music at the Basilica. He has previously been Acting Director of the Choir of Trinity College, Melbourne University, Director of Music at St Andrew's Anglican Church, Brighton, Director of Music at Geelong Grammar School, conductor of the Geelong Chorale, and conductor of many Geelong Summer Music Camp choirs. He is active as a choral director, organist and baritone soloist and has sung and recorded with The Australian Chamber Choir, The Ensemble of the Fourteenth Century, Les Six and La Romanesca. He has directed, played and sung with choir tours in the UK and Europe, including conducting and playing in Notre Dame, Paris, and has more recently played a solo recital for The Scots' Church International Organ Series.