



The Evansville Chapter of the
American Guild of Organists

presents

The Organ Sonatas of Felix Mendelssohn

Sunday April 21, 2024

First Presbyterian Church, Evansville, Indiana

The six Organ Sonatas by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847), Opus 65, were published in 1845. Originally drafted as seven individual voluntaries, Mendelssohn later extended and regrouped them into a set of six sonatas - sonata in the sense of a suite of varying pieces rather than a composition following classical sonata form. Robert Schumann described the sonatas as "intensely poetical...what a perfect picture they form in every sonata!" E. M. Gates observes that "the individual movements of Op. 65 may be conveniently divided into three distinct stylistic categories: polyphonic or fugal movements, song-like religious Adagios, and concert pieces in toccata style." The use of Lutheran chorales in several sonatas reflects Mendelssohn's intense interest in and work to revive the music of J.S. Bach.

PROGRAM

Sonata No. 1 in F minor

Allegro

Adagio

Andante recitativo

Allegro assai vivace

Sonata No. 2 in C minor/C major

Grave

Adagio

Allegro maestoso e vivace

Sonata No. 3 in A major

Con moto maestoso

Andante tranquillo

INTERMISSION

FLAUTO 2006

Sonata No. 5 in D major

Andante

Andante con moto

Allegro maestoso

Sonata No. 6 in D minor

Chorale and Variations

Fuga

Finale: Andante

Sonata No. 4 in B^bmajor

Andante religioso

Allegretto

Allegro maestoso e vivace

Organists

Carolyn Adams

Neal Biggers

Carol Grimm

Ryan Luttrull

Robert Nicholls

PROGRAM NOTES

The first movement of **Sonata I** includes fugue material (played on the Fisk organ) interspersed with chorale material (played on the Giesecke), an adaptation of the chorale *Was mein Gott will, das g'scheh allzeit* (What my God wills, may it always happen). The second movement is a song that loosely reflects the outline of the chorale melody. In the third, a light theme suggestive of a vocal recitative is interspersed with a heavy chordal motif. The final movement is a fantasia full of arpeggios and scale passages surrounding a couple of lively themes.

Sonata II begins with a slow, solemn section played on the Giesecke, followed by a hauntingly beautiful “song” line played on the Harmonic Flute stop of the Fisk, followed by a joyful movement in the parallel major key. (A final *Fugue* movement will be omitted today.)

Sonata III has a majestic beginning, incorporating material from a processional for the wedding of Mendelssohn’s sister Fanny, a composer in her own right. This is followed by the introduction of fugal material and the playing of Luther’s chorale *Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir* (From deep affliction I cry out to you) in the pedals. Later an energetic running sixteenth-note accompaniment is introduced, then a majestic final section amplifying the opening. An expressive, tranquil song-like movement completes the sonata.

Sonata V opens with a chorale, which is not an exact rendition of a known German chorale, followed by a song-like second movement over a lively, triplet, pedal motif, and finally a majestic third movement packed with modulations and which continues and expands on the use of triplets.

Sonata IV is based on Luther’s chorale *Vater unser im Himmelreich* (Our Father Who Art in Heaven). The chorale is stated in the beginning, followed by four variations with the chorale melody presented in a different voice in each. One can perhaps hear segments of the chorale melody in the fugue subject and gentle finale. The Brunzema organ serves as a surprisingly effective “second manual” for the single-manual Giesecke organ, allowing the separating of melodic and accompanimental lines.

Sonata IV was the last to be written, and will be played last in today’s concert, its last movement being a fitting finale for our concert. (An *Allegro con brio* movement will be omitted today.) The song-like *Andante religioso* is often played as a stand-alone piece, and is followed by the lyrical melody and non-stop sixteenth-note accompaniment of the *Allegretto*. The final movement consists of a vivacious fugue, the subject beginning with sixteenth notes in the pedals, book-ended by majestic opening and closing sections.

The mission of the American Guild of Organists is to foster a thriving community of musicians who share their knowledge and inspire passion for the organ. The Evansville Chapter serves southwest Indiana, western Kentucky, and southern Illinois, providing and supporting organ-related programs and events in the Tri-State area, and offering scholarships for organ lessons. Donations to support the musical and educational work of the Evansville Chapter may be placed in the offering plate near the front of the room or in the narthex in the back.

*www.evansvilleago.org
facebook.com/evansvilleAGO*

Upcoming A.G.O. Event:

Hymn Festival and Installation of A.G.O. Officers,
Monday evening, May 6, 2024 at St. Lucas U.C.C. in Evansville.
There will be a brief chapter meeting at 5:45 p.m. Central Time.
The service begins at 6:00 p.m.



The Edmund Giesecke Organ (1889) is one of five known to exist. Edmund Giesecke (1845-1928) was Evansville's own organ builder. This organ was originally made for a Lutheran church in Maribel, Wisconsin. The organ was moved in 1962 to a mission church in Maumee, Ohio. The church closed in 2016, and the new owners of the building contacted Evansville AGO about acquiring the instrument. The Evansville AGO wanted to preserve this important part of the rich musical history of the Tri-state area and make it possible for the instrument to once again lend its musical voice in worship and concert settings. Evansville AGO chose Taylor and Boody, of Staunton, Virginia, an internationally renowned builder and restorer of pipe organs, to work on this remarkable instrument in 2018.

The restored instrument is named "The Edmund Giesecke Organ restored in memory of Helen Skuggedal Reed". Helen was a member of the Evansville AGO Chapter for forty years and was a driving force behind the chapter's work, including research of the life and work of Edmund Giesecke and the acquisition of this instrument.

8' Principal
 8' Gedackt (stopped flute)
 8' Gamba (string)
 Unison Bass (Shared bass octave for 8' stops)
 4' Octave
 2 2/3, Quinte
 2' Octave
 Pedal 16' Subbass

Manual Coupler to Pedal

Bellows Signal (*Many decades ago this might have operated a little bell - now just a knocking sound to tell the pumper to pump.*)

Wind Pressure 70mm

Wind raised by hand using a single wedge bellow, or silent electrically powered fan.

Manual compass CC to a3 (56 notes)

Pedal compass CC to c1 (25 notes)

Casework - American Chestnut, Pedal sharps - Walnut

"Loud" pedal - engages all the manual stops
 "Soft" pedal - removes all manual stops except Gedackt and Gamba
 349 pipes

The Brunzema Kistenorgel (1989) is a one-manual, four-rank mechanical-action portative (portable) organ. It led congregational and choral singing in the First Pres Sanctuary between 1990 and 1991 while the C.B. Fisk organ was being built and installed.

From the manufacturer: The name of the Kisten Orgel comes from the Germanic word *Kiste* which literally means a wooden box or crate. The organ pipes are contained in a box and are protected when in use and also during transportation. This means that the instrument may not be too large nor too heavy. Two persons should be able to carry the parts. It should not be necessary to hire a moving company for transportation. This has been achieved by building the organ in two parts: the upper section contains the windchest with the pipes, and the lower section houses only the bellows and the electric blower.

The open metal pipes are cone-tuned, and metal stopped pipes have soldered-on caps for tuning stability. Key action is suspended mechanical. The pitch is A=440Hz. The organ has carved wood pipeshades on three sides for excellent tonal egress.

8' Gedackt (oak and walnut, stopped)	50 pipes
4' Flöte (oak and walnut, stopped)	50 pipes
2' Principal (12 basses stopped, 70% tin)	50 pipes
1 1/3' Quinte (12 basses at 2/3' pitch, 70% tin)	50 pipes

The C.B. Fisk Opus 98, designed and built by C.B. Fisk, Inc., of Gloucester, Massachusetts, has 29 stops and 1,922 pipes. C.B. Fisk, Inc. was founded in 1961 by Charles B. Fisk. A person of many interests and talents, Fisk chose organ building as the profession to combine his extraordinary aptitude in physics and his lifelong love of music. Over the past forty years, C.B. Fisk has been called on to build organs in a variety of academic, church, and concert hall settings, filling a wide range of musical needs.

The visual and mechanical design of First Presbyterian's organ began in December, 1989, with a site inspection and the subsequent construction of a scale model of the church sanctuary. American walnut was chosen for the casework, and its design was inspired by the many Victorian Gothic details in the church. The visual design was developed by Charles Nazarian, design consultant, with members of the Fisk shop.

Nearly one hundred members of the congregation and friends turned out in early January, 1991, to help carry the thousands of parts of the new organ into the church. During the remainder of January, the organ was set up in the balcony. From February through June, the Fisk artisans refined the voicing of all pipes and moving parts of the organ.

GREAT, 58 notes

1. Prestant 16'	58	pipes	
2. Principal 8'	58	pipes	
3. Spire Flute 8'	58	pipes	
4. Harmonic Flute 8'	46	pipes	* (1)
5. Octave 4'	58	pipes	
6. Chimney Flute 4'	58	pipes	*
7. Twelfth 2 2/3'	58	pipes	
8. Fifteenth 2'	58	pipes	
9. Seventeenth 1 3/5' (to f3)	54	pipes	
10. Mixture IV-VI	304	pipes	
11. German Trumpet 8'	58	pipes	
12. Bass Clarionet 16'	58	pipes	*

SWELL, 58 notes

13. Bourdon 16'	46	pipes	(2)
14. Violin Diapason 8'	58	pipes	
15. Celeste 8' (from C0)	46	pipes	

16. Stopt Diapason 8'	58	pipes	*
17. Italian Principal 4'	58	pipes	
18. Nazard 2 2/3'	58	pipes	
19. Doublet 2'	58	pipes	
20. Tierce II (to d3)	105	pipes	*
21. Sharp IV	210	pipes	
22. Hautboy 8'	58	pipes	*
23. French Trumpet 8'	58	pipes	

PEDAL, 30 notes

24. Open Wood 16'	30	pipes	*
25. Prestant 16'	30	notes	(3)
26. Bourdon 16'	30	pipes	*
27. Octave 8'	30	pipes	
28. Super Octave 4'	30	pipes	*
29. Trombone 16'	30	pipes	*
30. Trumpet 8'	30	pipes	*

- (1) CC-BB from No. 3
- (2) CC-BB from No. 26
- (3) From No. 1

* *Partly/completely reconditioned old pipework*

ACCESSORIES

Tremulant

Wind Stabilizer

Couplers:

Swell to Great

Great to Pedal

Swell to Pedal

Combination Pedals:

Two adjustable pairs of pedals ("On" and "Off"), one pair for stops of the right-hand jamb (Great), one for the stops of the left-hand jamb (Swell and Pedal).

Great to Pedal reversible lever

Wind Pressures:

Great and Swell 3¼"

Pedal 4¼"

Key Action:

Direct Mechanical

Stop Action:

Direct Mechanical

The organ was formally dedicated to the Glory of God on October 20, 1991, and renamed the Robert L. Nicholls organ on Sunday, July 25, 2021 in recognition of the Director of Music's 25th anniversary at First Presbyterian.