

HYMNUS

music for organ by Carson Cooman



ERIK SIMMONS

dda 25147

intangible classics

HYMNUS: organ music by Carson Cooman

1	Haec Aeterna (1999)		4:39
2	Festive Processional (2004)		3:20
3	Arioso (2013)		3:05
4	Pavane for a Duchess at St. Andrew's (2014)		6:03
5	Planctus IV (2014)		3:10
	Two Elegiac Pieces (2014)		5:41
6	I. Moderato rubato	3:01	
7	II. Moltissimo lento tranquillo	2:40	
8	Prelude in Copper (2014)		3:31
9	Chorale semplice (in memoriam James Pressler) (2014)		2:33
10	Folk Prelude on "Azmon" (2013)		2:35
11	Aria quasi una ciaccona (2013)		4:36
12	Partita semplice (2015)		6:14
	Three Enigmas (2015)		5:58
13	I. Quarter note = 63	1:54	
14	II. Half note = 50	2:21	
15	III. Eighth note = 80	1:44	
16	Prelude on "Dix" (2009)		3:58
17	Hymnus (2013)		3:41
	Diptych (2013)		6:52
18	I. Aria Serena	3:21	
19	II. Rondo Festivo	3:33	
TOTAL PLAYING TIME:			65:50

ERIK SIMMONS

The organ of St. Peter & Paul, Weissenau, Germany
Johann Nepomuk Holzhey, 1787; model by Gernot Wurst, 2015

This recording contains a variety of short pieces for organ written over the period 1999–2015. Most of the pieces were written in memory of various individuals. Responding to a passing with new music is something I have done with great frequency. Although all the works remain in my own style and manner, there is usually something about the musical content that is connected in some way to the individual being memorialized.

Haec Aeterna (1999; op. 118) was written for Emma Lou Diemer, who premiered it at First Presbyterian Church in Santa Barbara, California. The work is an atmospheric meditation using the hymn tune Old Hundredth. The title means “these eternal things.”

Festive Processional (2004; op. 566) was written for Wayne Leupold for his Festival Organ Series. It is a traditional “trumpet processional” with a contemporary harmonic vocabulary.

Arioso (2013; op. 1040) is dedicated to Scottish organist and music editor Geoffrey Atkinson. The piece is simple and lyrical.

Pavane for a Duchess at St. Andrew’s (2014; op. 1070) was commissioned in memory of Dorothy Virginia Garman Blankenship Laurie for the ongoing dedication events and recitals for the Jennie Laurie Memorial Organ at St. Andrew's Catholic Church in Roanoke, Virginia.

Planctus IV (2014; op. 1071) was composed in memory of American composer Elodie Lauten (1950–2014). The title planctus refers to a medieval form of song and poetry with a lamenting character.

Two Elegiac Pieces (2014; op. 1078) were written for organist Andrew Paul Holman. The two pieces have a bittersweet character, somewhat reminiscent of a certain strain of Scandinavian music.

Prelude in Copper (2014; op. 1060) was written for organist Christa Rakich in memory of her father, Antone “Tony” Rakich (1929–2014). Tony Rakich was a metallurgist and one of the world’s leading experts on copper. He particularly loved violin music, and this piece thus evokes violinistic textures in its outer sections, in the manner of the North German baroque (though with more contemporary harmonic motion).

Chorale semplice (in memoriam James Pressler) (2014; op. 1054) was written in memory of James Pressler, an organist who after health difficulties made physical playing no longer possible continued to pursue sharing his musical performances by means of computer realizations.

Folk Prelude on “Azmon” (2013; op. 1020) was written for Christian Lane, in memory of his grandfather Albert K. Lane, Jr. (1932–2013). Lane was a United Methodist minister, and the hymn tune AZMON, with Charles Wesley’s text “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing,” is very important in that tradition.

Aria quasi una ciaccona (2013; op. 1044) was written in memory of Elin Helen Simmons (1931–2013), mother of organist Erik Simmons. It is a lyric aria that is presented over a chaconne-like extended chord progression.

Partita semplice (2015; op. 1123) for organ was written in memory of organ builder Robert Byrd (1959–2014), a beloved presence for many years on the Boston musical scene. At the time of his death he was organist at Old West Church. The partita consists of seven short movements, each a variation of the opening chorale-like material.

Three Enigmas (2015; op. 1110) are, as the title would imply, three enigmatic pieces. Each is slow, brief, and quiet. They pose more questions than they answer. The work is dedicated in memory of German organist and composer Peter Bares (1936–2014), whose life and work were committed to exploring the furthest boundaries of organ and church music.

Prelude on “Dix” (2009; op. 852) was written in memory of Robert Zeeb (1938–2009), a longtime member of the First Unitarian Society in Newton, Massachusetts. His love of the outdoors is reflected in the choice of the hymn tune, often coupled with Folliott S. Pierpont’s text “For the Beauty of the Earth.”

Hymnus (2013; op. 1036) was written for the staff of C. B. Fisk, Inc. organ builders (Gloucester, Massachusetts) in memory of the company founder Charles B. Fisk (1925–83), on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of his passing.

Diptych (2013; op. 1007) is dedicated to Bernard Wayne Sanders. Its two movements (panels) present contrasting affects: a tranquil “Aria Serena” followed by an excited “Rondo Festivo.”

PERFORMER AND COMPOSER

Erik Simmons started playing the organ at age 10 when he was a chorister at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Glendale, California. His primary organ teacher was Richard Slater. Erik has furthered his studies by working with Lanny Collins, Barbara Baird, and Lee Garrett, and through master classes with various clinicians, including Harald Vogel.

For a number of years, most recently at the Intel Corporation, Erik worked in the fields of new product development and coached teams in systems engineering, requirements engineering, Agile & Lean product development, and related areas. Erik holds a BA in applied mathematics and MS in mathematical modeling from Humboldt State University. As an organist, he has recorded several CDs of music, including "Or Nous Dites Marie: A French Romantic Christmas," "Reflection and Praise," "Organ Music by James Woodman" (Soundspells), and six CDs of the music of American composer Carson Cooman, including "Litany", "Masque", and "Preludio" on Divine Art.

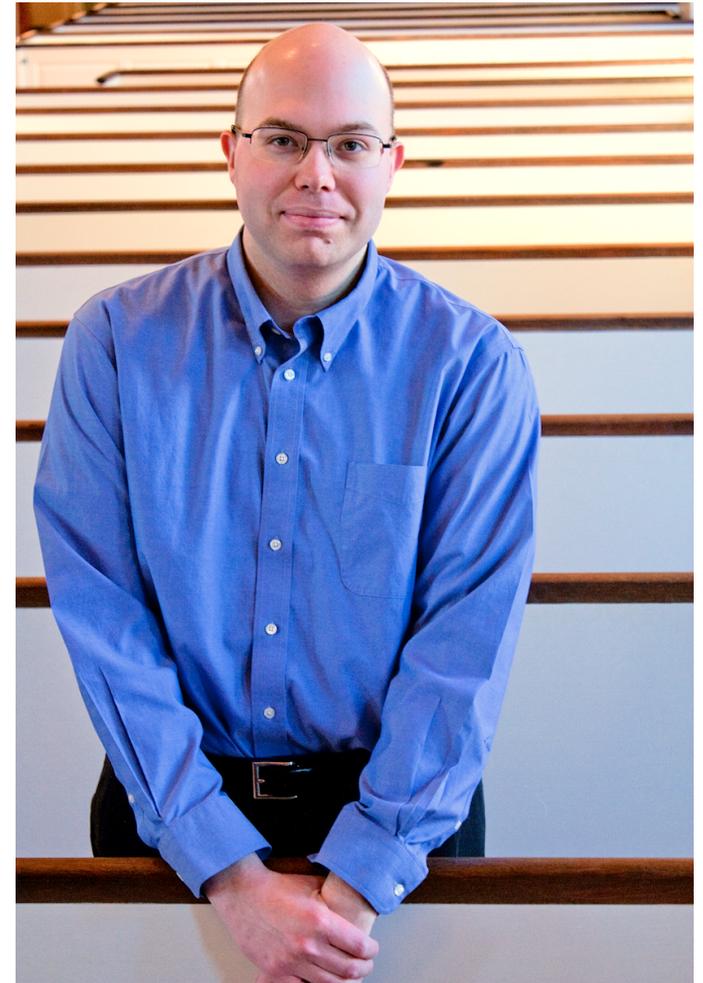
Carson Cooman (b. 1982) is an American composer with a catalog of hundreds of works in many forms—ranging from solo instrumental pieces to operas, and from orchestral works to hymn tunes. His music has been performed on all six inhabited continents in venues that range from the stage of Carnegie Hall to the basket of a hot air balloon.

Cooman's work appears on over forty recordings, including more than twenty complete CDs on the Naxos, Albany, Artek, Gothic, Divine Art, Métier, Diversions, Altarus, Convivium, MSR Classics, Raven, and Zimbel labels. Cooman's primary composition studies were with Bernard Rands, Judith Weir, Alan Fletcher, and James Willey. As an active concert organist, Cooman specializes in the performance of contemporary music. Over 150 new works have been composed for him by composers from around the world, and his organ performances can be heard on a number of CD recordings. Cooman is also a writer on musical subjects, producing articles and reviews frequently for a number of international publications. He serves as an active consultant on music business matters to composers and performing organizations, specializing particularly in the area of composer estates and archives.

For more information, visit www.carsoncooman.com



Erik
Simmons



Carson
Cooman

Organ of St. Peter & Paul, Weissenau, Germany

Johann Nepomuk Holzhey, 1787

Model by Gernot Wurst, 2015

Johann Nepomuk Holzhey (1741–1809) was one of the great South German master organ builders in the second half of the 18th century. Holzhey succeeded in creating a distinct personal style which serves today as an inspiration for the design of new organs. His instruments belong largely to the rococo and classical styles. However, in his later works the influence of romantic sound aesthetics becomes more and more perceptible. Holzhey's work represents the zenith of classicistic organ building in South Germany. Presumably educated by his uncle Alexander Holzhey, J. N. Holzhey received most significant ideas for his work from Karl Riepp. While his uncle built instruments in South German style, Riepp practiced French organ building. Holzhey's masterstroke was to combine both styles and thus create tonally highly appealing instruments. His contemporaries frequently marveled at how soft but also how powerful his organs sounded.

The design of his large instruments like the organ of St. Peter & Paul is of utmost clarity. The first manual (Hauptwerk) always represents the great organ with a complete set of diapason stops, enriched with numerous colorful flutes and strings. The French influence manifests itself in the addition of trumpets which are tonally reinforced by a Cornet. The second manual (Positiv) is a scaled-down version of the Hauptwerk in accordance with South German tradition. A celeste stop (Unda maris) and an overblowing flute (Flaut travers) make the Positiv especially expressive. The pipes of the third manual (Echo) reside behind closed doors in the foundation of the organ. This division consists of flutes, a string, two solo reeds and a Cornet for solistic playing. French traditions are unmistakable although Holzhey redesigns the Cornet division. By means of dividing the reeds it becomes possible use them as solo stops and simultaneously accompany them on the same manual. Thereby the Récit division of the French organ (which Riepp built) becomes unnecessary. In addition, the Echo Cornet is tonally tamed and is no longer the radiant solo stop. The Pedal is sparingly equipped, but the three reeds of the trumpet family provide it with gravitas and brilliance. (*Ulrich Höflacher*)

This recording was produced in live performance via the Hauptwerk system. The virtual model was created by Gernot Wurst (www.prospectum.com).

ORGAN SPECIFICATION

Hauptwerk (Man. I)

Prestant 16
Principal 8
Copel 8
Quintadena 8
Gamba 8
Viola 8 (*undulating*)
Octav 4
Flöten 4
Nazard 2f.
Superoctav 2
Sexqualter 3-4f.
Mixtur 6f.
Cornet 3f.
Trompet 8
Clarion 4

Positiv (Man. II)

Principal 8
Rohflöten 8
Salicional 8
Unda Maris 8 (*undulating*)
Flauttravers 8
Octav 4
Holflöten 4
Fugari 4
Quint 3
Hörnle 2f.
Cimbal 5f.
Fagott Bass 8
Hautbois Diskant 8

Echo (Man. III)

Nachthorn 8
Dulciana 8
Spitzflöten 4
Flageolet 2
Cornet Resit 4f.
Vox Humana Bass 8
Vox Humana Diskant 8
Cromorne Bass 8
Schalmei Diskant 8
Tremulant (Diskant)

Pedal

Subbaß 16
Octavbaß 8
Violonbaß 8
Cornetbaß 4f.
Bompard 16
Trompet 8
Clarion 4

Couplers:

Echo-Cupl (III-I);
Positiv-Cupl (II-I);

Tuttibaß (I-P)

Temperament: Modified Werckmeister III, 1691



Rising at Dawn METIER MSV 28538
Chamber music with brass

Katarzyna Sadej (mezzo-soprano) : Chris Gekker (trumpet)
Jeffrey Grossman (piano) : Mark Nelson (tuba)
Marie Sierra (piano) : Rebecca Smith (harp)

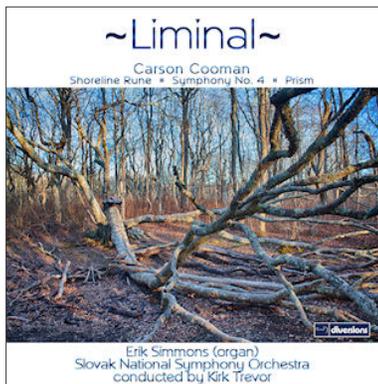
“Chasing the Moon Down is a genuine masterpiece... Cooman is clearly not just a talented composer but a genuinely gifted one.” – James A. Altena (Fanfare)



In Beauty Walking DIVINE ART DDA 25117
orchestral music

Chloé Trevor (violin) : Leah Crane (soprano)
Bohuslav Martinů Philharmonic Orchestra :
Kirk Trevor, conductor

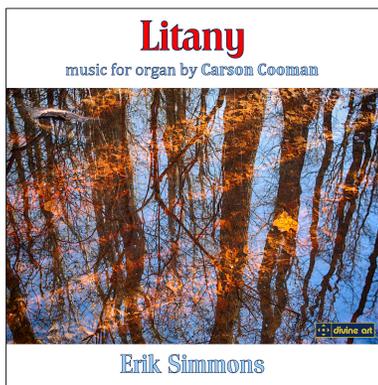
“There is something very appealing and distinct in the pieces we can hear in this well played and superbly recorded program.” - Remy Franck (Pizzicato)



Liminal DIVERSIONS DDV 24161
orchestral and organ music
including Symphony No. 4

Slovak National Symphony Orchestra :
Kirk Trevor, conductor

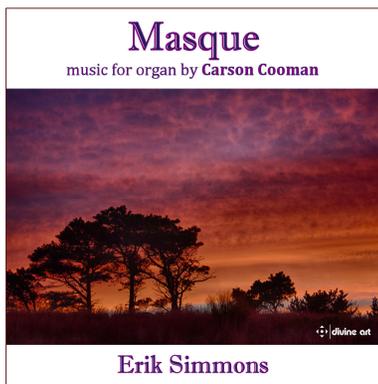
“The sound quality of the recording is notable, the playing superb. Carson Cooman’s music is beautiful, inspiring and seductive in equal measure.” – John France (MusicWeb)



Litany DIVINE ART DDA 25116

Erik Simmons (Laurenskerk, Rotterdam)

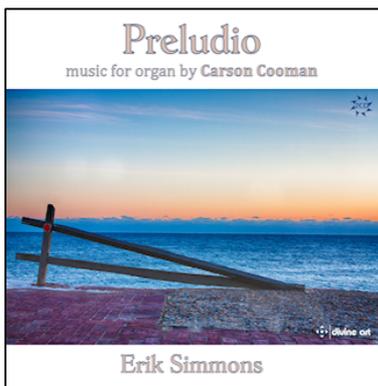
“Great music, performed on a magnificent pipe organ, by an organist at the top of his game, all captured in vividly realistic sound. A benchmark recording.” – Jean-Yves Duperron (Classical Music Sentinel)



Masque DIVINE ART DDA 25127

Erik Simmons (Laurenskerk, Rotterdam)

“Beautifully crafted Preludes and Fugues ... This is an organ symphony to rival any, spectacularly played by Erik Simmons. He receives an excellent recording and there are excellent notes from Carson Cooman. Surely all organ enthusiasts will want this fine new disc.” – Bruce Reader (The Classical Reviewer)



Preludio DIVINE ART DDA 21229 (2CD)

Erik Simmons (Basilica Mariä-Himmelfahrt, Krzesnów)

“This impressive music was inspired by the style of the Renaissance and the early Baroque and will appeal to both early music lovers and followers of the modern organ repertoire. The brilliant Simmons gives assured performances throughout.” – John Pitt (New Classics)

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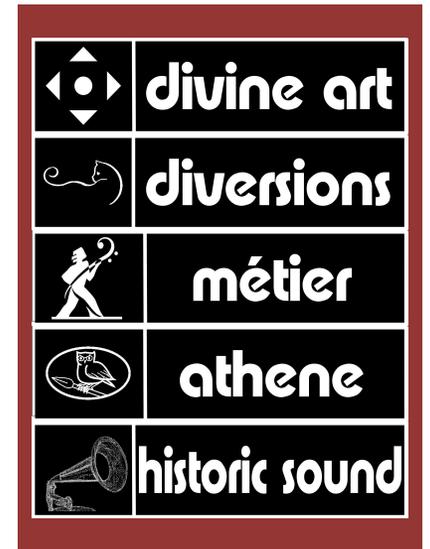
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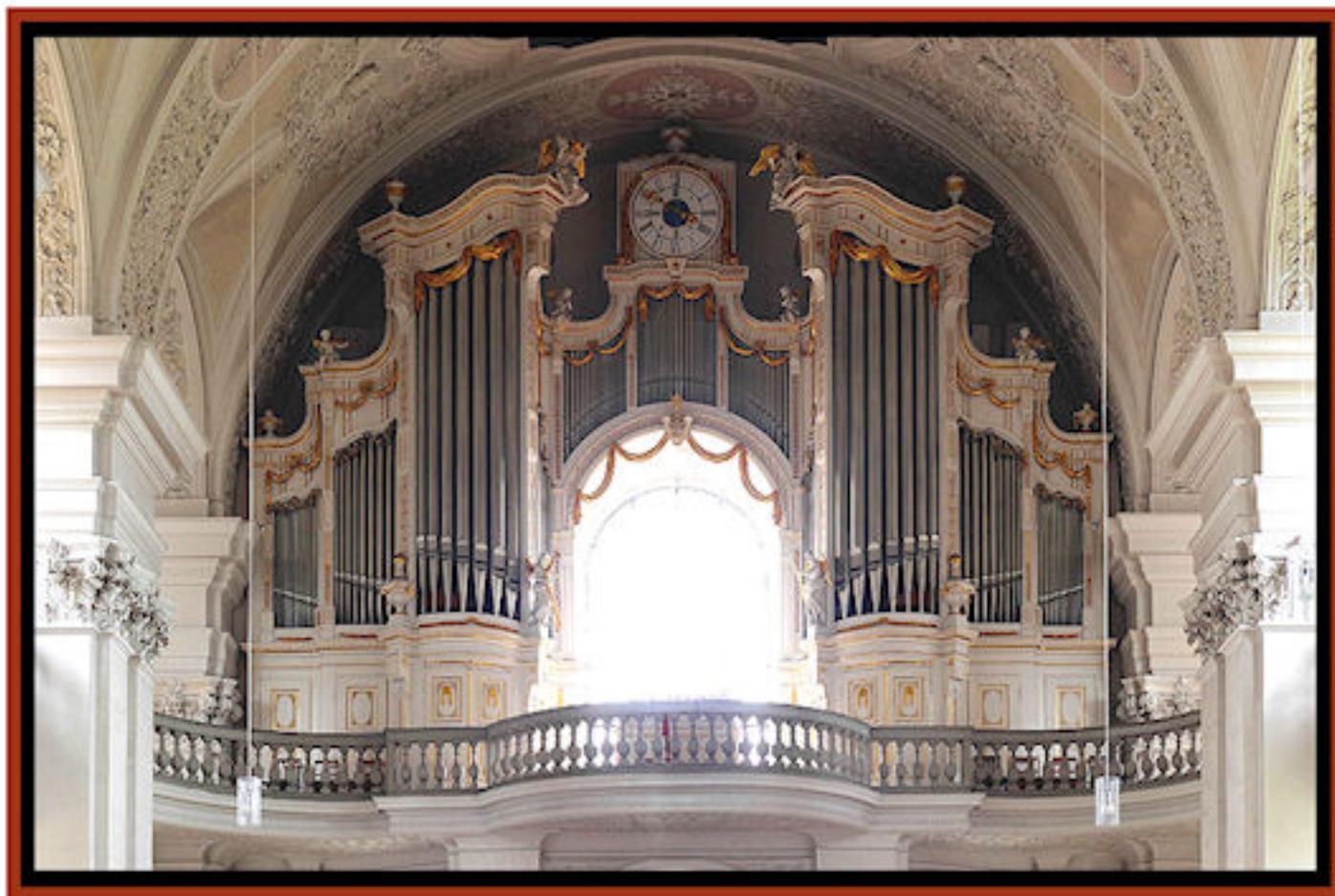
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The organ of St. Peter & Paul, Weissenau, Germany

'Hymnus' was recorded between January and April, 2016
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Producers: Carson Cooman and Erik Simmons
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