

**WILLIAM
WHITEHEAD**

**The Great Organ
of Washington Cathedral**

LEO SOWERBY

Symphony in G Major



SYMPHONY IN G MAJOR (1930) One of Sowerby's large works for organ, this is an organ symphony in the true sense, as originated by the French organist/composer Charles-Marie Widor. Sowerby's writing encompasses the full range of the organ, both dynamically and in his use of different voices of the instrument. Perhaps his numerous orchestral compositions influenced his suggestion for string stops on the organ in many sections of the symphony, creating not only contrast to the broader sections, but lovely melodic passages. Contrasts are an important part of Sowerby's compositions, along with his use of imitation, sequences, chromaticism and long flowing melodies over rich harmonies, all found in this symphony.

The Symphony opens with a theme stated broadly and fully, which is used as the basis for the entire movement. This theme is then found, in part and in entirety, in various voices throughout the development of the movement. Sowerby moves into a softer, freer section involving an interaction of melodies both individually and in polyphonic writing, with an occasional full statement of theme, only to be echoed in softer voices. After building to a dramatic climax, the movement continues its hauntingly beautiful melodic passages, diminishing to a peaceful conclusion.

Sowerby replaces the traditional slow movement of a three- or four-movement work with a faster, more intricate second movement involving fanfares and brief fantasia sections, calling for expressive reeds. This movement exemplifies more playful writing using echo passages, running patterns and the complete range of keyboards. The large moving chords and chromaticism are typical of Sowerby. Melodic

passages move between the manuals and pedals and appear simultaneously, building to a full exciting ending.

The passacaglia, one of Sowerby's most often-used forms, is found in the third movement. After its entrance, the melodic line in the manuals is gradually enlarged upon and returns in solo statements throughout the movement. This grand movement not only involves the passacaglia, but imitation in canonic passages. Sowerby's chromatic writing drives toward the grandiose ending of this symphony.

CARILLON (1917) In this short piece, from Sowerby's early years of composing, we find lovely melodic lines used in various voices of the organ along with the chromatic writing traditional of Sowerby during this period. He was explicit with his registration suggestions, creating a carillon effect with chimes, harp or celesta in both the manuals and the pedals simultaneously, giving the impression of hearing the bells of several churches filling the evening air. Combined with Sowerby's often-found suggestion of string stops, this produces a very comforting, relaxing piece for the listener.

A WEDDING PROCESSIONAL (1952) A majestic work, this large broad processional is perhaps a bit lengthy for the traditional wedding ceremony. Sowerby hints at fanfares and includes a brief trumpet solo in the opening section, which is repeated before leading into a quieter section with a constant forward motion building to the full return of the opening idea. An optional quiet ending is included with the printed music.

Notes by Dale K. Tucker, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

The Great Organ of Washington Cathedral

Constructed by Ernest M. Skinner and Sons and installed in 1938-39, the Great Organ of Washington Cathedral was considered by Mr. Skinner to be his finest achievement in organ design. The original design was intended to fill the relatively limited space of the Great Choir with organ tone, as in the 1930's no one really knew if or when the entire building was to be finished. After the war, construction on the cathedral resumed; a new console was added in 1958; two Baroque divisions were designed by Joseph Whiteford and installed in 1963, and the magnificent Trompette-en-Chamade on high wind-pressure was mounted at the triforium level above the High Altar. From 1970 to 1975, a consortium of Richard Dirksen, Joseph Whiteford, Roy Perry and Robert Wyant planned the complete reworking of the instrument, designing it to play the entire literature, and incorporating almost 7,000 new pipes and retaining the finest work from the original instrument. The Great Organ as it now stands contains nine divisions and 10,450 pipes.

But just as important as the sound of the organ itself are the acoustical properties of the great soaring Gothic arches of the cathedral. A height of 100 feet from the marble floor to the top of the vault and an interior length of 480 feet produce about five seconds of natural reverberation, giving the organ sound a great sense of grandeur and spaciousness, an environment seldom encountered in North American churches. The Great Organ is the largest in the Washington, DC, area and one of the great masterpieces of American organ building in the country.

SPECIFICATIONS OF THE GREAT ORGAN

Ernest M. Skinner, 1938

Aeolian-Skinner Console, 1958

Tonal Additions by Joseph Whiteford, 1963, 1974

Four Manuals, 185 Ranks

GREAT First bay north triforium

- 16' Violon
- 16' Quintade
- 8' Prinzipal
- 8' Spitz Prinzipal
- 8' Waldflöte
- 8' Holz Bordun
- 8' Salicional
- 8' Violon
- 8' Erzähler
- 4' Oktav
- 4' Spitz Oktav
- 4' Koppel Flöte
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' Quinte
- 2' Super Oktav
- 2' Block Flöte
- Terzzymbel VI-X
- Mixtur IV-V
- Klein Mixtur IV
- Scharf IV
- Sesquialtera II
- 16' Bombarde
- 8' Trompette en Chamade (Solo)
- 8' Tuba Mirabilis (Solo)
- 8' Trompette
- 4' Clairon
- Zimbelstern

SWELL

Sowerby Memorial Division, 1974

First bay south triforium

- 16' Violoncelle
- 8' Montre
- 8' Violoncelle Céleste II
- 4' Préstant
- Plein Jeu V
- Cymbale IV
- 16' Bombarde
- 8' Trompette
- 4' Clairon

Main Swell Division Second bay north triforium

- 16' Flûte Courte
- 8' Bourdon
- 8' Flûte à Fuseau
- 8' Flûte Céleste II
- 8' Viole de Gambe
- 8' Viole Céleste
- 8' Voix Céleste II
- 4' Octave
- 4' Flûte Traversière
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' Nasard
- 2' Octavin
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' Tierce
- Petit Jeu IV
- 8' 2ème Trompette
- 8' Hautbois
- 8' Cor d'Amour
- 4' 2ème Clairon
- Tremblant

String Swell Division Fifth bay south triforium

- 8' Flûte d'Argent II
- 8'-4' Chœur des Violes V
- 8' Éolienne Céleste II
- 8' Voix Humaine

CHOIR Third bay north triforium

- 16' Gemshorn
- 8' Chimney Flute
- 8' Viola Pomposa
- 8' Viola Céleste
- 8'-4' Chœur des Violes V (Swell)
- 8' Viole Céleste II
- 8' Kleiner Erzähler II
- 4' Principal
- 4' Harmonic Flute
- 4' Fugara
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' Rohr Nasat
- 2' Hellflöte
- 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ ' Terz
- Mixture III-IV
- Glockenspiel II
- 16' Bassoon
- 8' Trompette en Chamade (Solo)
- 8' Trumpet
- 8' Cromorne

4' Regal
Tremulant
Sub Celesta
Celesta

SOLO Fourth bay north triforium

8' Diapason
8' Solo Flute
8' Cello
8' Cello Céleste
4' Orchestral Flute
Terzzymbel VI-X (Great)
Full Mixture VII
16' Double Trumpet
16' Bass Clarinet
8' Trompette en Chamade
8' Tuba Mirabilis
8' Trumpet
8' French Horn
8' Corno di Bassetto
8' English Horn
8' Flugel Horn
4' Clairon
Tremolo
Chimes

PEDAL First through fourth bays north triforium

32' Subbass
32' Kontra Violon
16' Contre Basse
16' Principal
16' Bourdon
16' Violon (Great)
16' Violoncelle (Swell)
16' Violoncelle Céleste (Swell)
16' Gemshorn (Choir)
16' Flûte Courte (Swell)
10½' Quinte
8' Octave
8' Spitzflöte
8' Gedackt
8' Violoncelle Céleste II (Swell)
8' Flûte Courte (Swell)
5½' Quinte
4' Choral Bass
4' Cor de Nuit

2' Fife
Gross Kornett IV
Rausch Quinte II
Fourniture IV
Acuta III
64' Bombarde Basse
32' Contre Bombartde
32' Contre Fagot
16' Ophicléide
16' Bombarde (Swell)
16' Fagot
8' Trompette en Chamade (Solo)
8' Tuba Mirabilis (Solo)
8' Trompette
8' Bombarde (Swell)
4' Clairon
2' Zink

Musician's Gallery Divisions, 1963

BRUSTWERK First bay north gallery

8' Spitz Prinzipal
4' Praestant
2¾' Koppel Nasat
2' Lieblich Prinzipal
Mixture IV-VI
8' Rankett

POSITIV First bay south gallery

8' Nason Gedackt
4' Rohrflöte
2' Nachthorn
1¾' Terz
1½' Larigot
1' Sifflöte
Zymbel IV
4' Rankett (Brustwerk)
Tremulant

PEDAL First bays north and south galleries

16' Gedackt Bass
8' Oktav
8' Nason Gedackt (Positiv)
4' Super Oktav
4' Rohrflöte (Positiv)
16' Rankett (Brustwerk)
4' Rankett (Brustwerk)

WILLIAM WHITEHEAD occupies a unique place among the distinguished organists of our time. He received the Bachelor of Music degree from Oklahoma University where he was a student of Mildred Andrews. Post graduate studies included The Curtis Institute, as an associate of Alexander McCurdy and subsequent study with Robert Baker at Union Theological Seminary. He received his Master of Arts degree from Columbia University.

Whitehead was the first organist to win the annual Young Artist Award of The Philadelphia Orchestra, resulting in a solo appearance with the orchestra under the baton of Eugene Ormandy at the Academy of Music and a performance with that ensemble as organist for the first presentation of Handel's *Messiah* during the opening season of Lincoln Center's Philharmonic Hall.

In 1970, Maestro Ormandy invited Whitehead to open the '70-'71 season in the Philadelphia premiere of Aaron Copland's *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra*.

Solo appearances have taken the artist into the major musical centers of Europe and coast to coast in the United States. European tours have included the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Berlin's Philharmonic Hall and Bach's own St. Thomaskirche in Leipzig where he recorded a recreation of Mendelssohn's famous 1840 Leipzig Bach Recital.

He has played many of the extraordinary organs of America, among them the Cadet Chapel Organ at West Point, the massive instruments at The Riverside Church in New York City, John Wanamaker's Grand Court in Philadelphia, The Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York and the Great Organ at Washington Cathedral in Washington, D.C., where the program contained on this disc was recorded.

An associate of the American Guild of Organists, he has served as Dean and Sub-Dean of chapters in Pennsylvania and New York. After serving two terms on the National Council he was elected Treasurer of the Guild.

As a teacher, he has served on the faculty of the Guilman Organ School in New York City and taught five years at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. Since 1974 he has been a member of the faculty at Mannes College of Music in New York.

Whitehead has appeared with the New York Philharmonic in concerts conducted by Leonard Bernstein, Erich Leinsdorf and Zubin Mehta and performs regularly with Richard Westenburg and Musica Sacra in their Lincoln Center concerts.

In addition to solo recital tours he serves as Director of Music and Organist of The Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City, a post held since 1973. There Whitehead has conducted premiere performances of works by Virgil Thomson and Gerald Busby as well as maintaining a rigorous schedule of oratorio presentations by the choir with a minimum of eight major offerings each season and the annual concert with noted jazz pianist and composer Dave Brubeck.

Whitehead is listed in *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who In American Music*.

LEO SOWERBY (1895-1968) was an American composer who wrote for keyboard, voice, choir, instruments and orchestra. His musical training began at the age of seven with the piano and he soon developed the desire to compose. Sowerby's study of the organ began at age 15, leading to a love of the instrument.

1913 marked Sowerby's acceptance as a composer with the debut of his **VIOLIN CONCERTO** in Chicago. His serious works evidence his affection for the fugue, passacaglia and other long-established forms. The folk music of the time was another strong influence which led Sowerby to compose in a lighter style that was also widely accepted.

During his life Sowerby received many awards and honors. Among them, he had the distinction of being the first American awarded the Prix de Rome and the first American named a Fellow of the Royal School of Church Music. Sowerby was awarded honorary Doctor of Music degrees by two universities. His choral and orchestral composition **CANTICLE OF THE SUN** earned him a Pulitzer Prize in 1946. Sowerby is recognized as the founder of the College of Church Musicians at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., where he presided as Director from 1962 until his death.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Recording Producer and Engineer:

Jerry Barnes

Production Assistance:

Mark Huffman, Cathedral Sound Engineer

Recorded in The Washington Cathedral:

The Right Reverend John T. Walker,

Bishop of Washington, Dean of

Washington Cathedral

The Reverend Provost Charles A. Perry,

Provost of Washington Cathedral

Canon Richard Wayne Dirksen, Precentor

Douglas Major, Organist and Choirmaster

Robert Lehman, Assistant Organist and

Choirmaster

Art Direction:

Jennifer Richardson

Stoney Meadow Design

Cover Illustration:

William F. Kuch

Also available on cassette: Resmiranda 7004

Printed in Canada

WILLIAM WHITEHEAD
The Great Organ of Washington Cathedral
LEO SOWERBY
1895-1968
Symphony in G Major

SYMPHONY IN G MAJOR

- 1** First Movement [17:53]
- 2** Second Movement [7:56]
- 3** Third Movement, passacaglia [12:05]
- 4** CARRILLON [7:25]
- 5** A WEDDING PROCESSIONAL [5:57]

DD All Resmiranda Compact Discs are produced from DIGITAL masters.