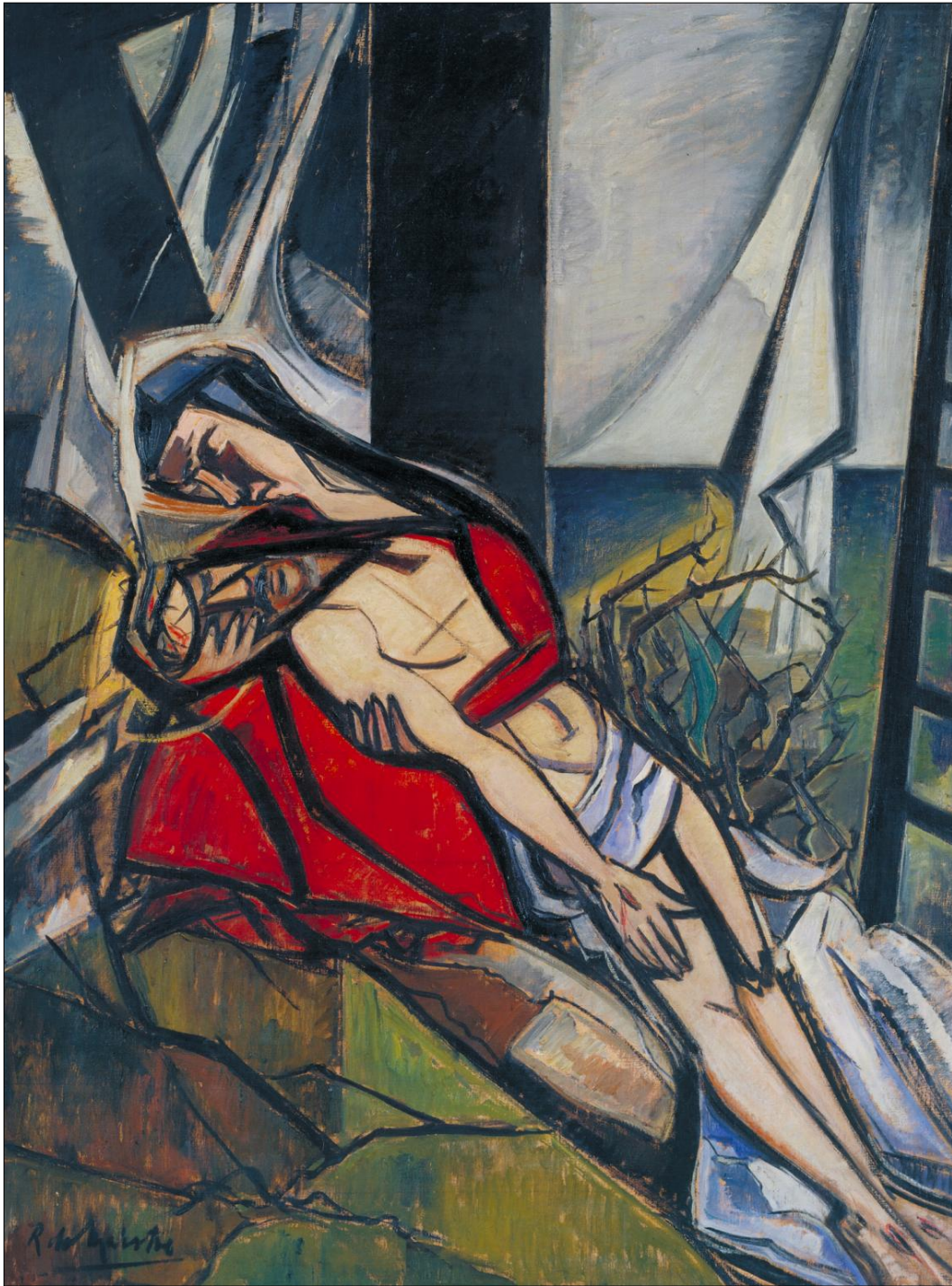


MUSIC AT ST. PHILIP  MUSIC *for* HOLY WEEK



## *A Musical Meditation for Holy Saturday*

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St. Philip Presbyterian Church ♦ Houston ♦ March 31, 2018 ♦ 5 pm

## PROGRAM

*Given the solemnity of Holy Saturday within the Christian calendar,  
we respectfully ask for no applause during or after this program.  
Your quiet participation in it is greatly appreciated.*

**Prélude, Fugue et Variation** Op. 18 (1860–1862)

César Franck  
1822–1890

**Leçons de Ténèbres** (1710) – Première Leçon à une voix

François Couperin  
1668–1733

### SUNG IN LATIN

Incipit lamentatio Jeremiæ prophetæ.

**Aleph.** Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo:  
facta est quasi vidua domina gentium;  
princeps provinciarum facta est sub tributo.

**Beth.** Plorans ploravit in nocte,  
et lacrimæ eius in maxillis eius;  
non est qui consoletur eam ex omnibus charis eius:  
omnes amici eius spreverunt eam  
et facti sunt ei inimici.

**Ghimel.** Migravit Juda propter afflictionem  
et multitudinem servitutis;  
habitavit inter gentes, nec invenit requiem:  
omnes persecutores eius apprehenderunt eam inter angustias.

**Daleth.** Viae Sion lugent,  
eo quod non sint qui veniant ad solemnitatem:  
omnes portæ eius destructæ, sacerdotes eius gementes,  
virgines eius squalidae, et ipsa oppressa amaritudine.

**Heth.** Facti sunt hostes eius in capite,  
inimici eius locupletati sunt;  
quia Dominus locutus est super eam,  
propter multitudinem iniquitatum eius.  
Parvuli eius ducti sunt in captivitatem,  
ante faciem tribulantis.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

### TRANSLATION

Here begins the lamentation of the prophet Jeremiah.

**Aleph.** How desolate lies the city that was once thronged with people:  
the one-time queen of nations has become as a widow;  
once a ruler of provinces, she is now subject to others.

**Beth.** By night she weeps in sorrow,  
and tears run down her cheeks;  
of all who love her, there's none to console her:  
all her friends have betrayed her  
and have become her enemies.

**Ghimel.** Judah has gone into exile because of her suffering  
and the burden of her servitude;  
she is settled among the heathen, and has found no rest:  
all her pursuers have captured her in the straits.

**Daleth.** The streets of Zion mourn  
for there are none to attend her ceremonies:  
all her gates are ruined, her priests sigh and groan,  
her virgins are afflicted, and she is overwhelmed with bitterness.

**Heth.** Her enemies are in the ascendant,  
her adversaries prosper;  
for the Lord has passed judgement on her  
for the multitude of her iniquities.  
Her children are led captive  
before the face of her oppressor.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
turn to the Lord your God.

LAMENTATIONS 1:1-5

**Petit pièce** JA 033 (1932)

Jehan Alain  
1911–1940

**Lamento** JA 014 (1930)

**Aria** JA 138 (1938)

**Leçons de Ténèbres** – Deuxième Leçon à une voix

François Couperin

**Vau.** Et egressus est a filia Sion omnis decor eius;  
facti sunt principes eius velut arietes non invenientes pascua;  
et abierunt absque fortitudine ante faciem subsequens.

**Vau.** The daughter of Zion has lost all her beauty;  
her princes are become like rams that find no pasture;  
and they have fled without strength before the pursuer.

**Zain.** Recordata est Jerusalem dierum afflictionis suæ  
et prævaricationis omnium desiderabilium suorum,  
quæ habuerat a diebus antiquis, cum caderet  
populus eius in manu hostili, et non esset auxiliator.  
Viderunt eam hostes, et deriserunt sabbata eius.

**Heth.** Peccatum peccavit Jerusalem,  
propterea instabilis facta est.  
Omnes qui glorificabant eam spreverunt illam:  
quoniam viderunt ignominiam eius.  
Ipsa autem gemens conversa est retrorsum.

**Teth.** Sordes eius in pedibus eius,  
nec recordata est finis sui:  
deposita est vehementer  
non habens consolatorem:  
vide, Domine, afflictionem meam,  
quoniam erectus est inimicus.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

**Zain.** Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction,  
and her miseries, all the pleasant things she had  
in the days of old before her people fell into the hand  
of the enemy, and none did help her.  
Her foes gloated over her and did mock her Sabbaths.

**Heth.** Jerusalem has sinned grievously;  
therefore she has fallen.  
All those who used to honor her now scorn her;  
For they have seen her disgrace.  
Yet she herself sighs and turns away her face.

**Teth.** Her skirts are dirty,  
she cannot remember her own end:  
her disgrace is complete,  
she has no comforter:  
see, Lord, my affliction,  
for the enemy has become self-important.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
turn to the Lord your God.

LAMENTATIONS 1:6-9

**Le Banquet céleste** (1928)

Olivier Messiaen  
1908–1992

**Leçons de Ténèbres – Troisième Leçon à deux voix**

François Couperin

**Jod.** Manum suam misit hostis  
ad omnia desiderabilia eius;  
quia vidit gentes ingressas sanctuarium suum,  
de quibus præceperas ne intrarent in ecclesiam tuam.

**Caph.** Omnis populus eius gemens,  
et quærens panem.  
Dederunt pretiosa quæque pro cibo,  
ad refocillandam animam.  
Vide, Domine, et considera quoniam facta sum vilis.

**Lamed.** O vos omnes qui transitis per viam,  
attendite, et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus; quoniam  
vindemiavit me, ut locutus est Dominus  
in die iræ furoris sui.

**Mem.** De excelso misit ignem in ossibus meis,  
et erudit me: expandit rete pedibus meis,  
convertit me retrorsum: posuit me desolatam,  
tota die mœrore confectam.

**Nun.** Vigilavit iugum iniquitatum mearum;  
in manu eius convolutæ sunt, et impositæ collo meo;  
infirmata est virtus mea;  
dedit me Dominus in manu  
de qua non potero surgere.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

**Jod.** The enemy has laid its hands  
on all that was precious to her;  
for she has seen the enemy, whom you had forbidden  
to enter your assembly, coming into her sanctuary.

**Caph.** All her people sigh,  
and search for bread.  
They have bartered all their precious belongings for food  
to revive their soul.  
Look, Lord, and consider; for I have become vile.

**Lamed.** All you who pass this way,  
look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow;  
for the Lord has cruelly punished me, as he said he would  
on the day of his fierce wrath.

**Mem.** From above he has sent fire into my bones,  
and has chastised me: he has made a net under my feet,  
and turned me back: he has made me desolate  
and overburdened with sorrow all day long.

**Nun.** The yoke of my iniquities weighs me down;  
they are folded together in his hand and made into a collar;  
my strength is weakened;  
the Lord has delivered me into the hands  
of those from whom I cannot rise up.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
turn to the Lord your God.

LAMENTATIONS 1:10-14



*A free-will offering to benefit Music at St. Philip will be received at the door at the conclusion of the program.*

## NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

**François Couperin** composed his three “Lessons for Tenebrae” around 1710 for the Abbey of Longchamp. Situated in the Bois de Boulogne just outside of Paris, this abbey enjoyed royal protection and was renowned among connoisseurs for its artful music and grand liturgies. Perhaps inevitably, its prominence and wealth also brought unwanted attention: in the 1650s St Vincent de Paul denounced the abbey’s nuns for their worldly ways, while Diderot satirized them mercilessly in the 1780s with his scandalous novel *La Religieuse*.

But Couperin’s relationship with Longchamp seems to have been both positive and productive; for this abbey he wrote six more Holy Week “lessons” that do not survive. His three extant *Leçons de Ténèbres*, on texts drawn from the Lamentations of Jeremiah, served as the primary musical offerings at Longchamp’s Matins liturgy for Maundy Thursday, which likely occurred late in the evening on Wednesday of Holy Week. (Matins or “morning prayer” was supposed to be celebrated before dawn, making it hardly convenient for those who enjoyed the finer things in life.)

A Tenebrae service, by design, typically includes readings from the Book of Lamentations, as our Bible calls it, which follows the Book of Jeremiah, who may or may not have authored both books. The Lamentations, written sometime following the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon some six centuries before the time of Christ, are essentially civic laments: the poet mourns a city destroyed, its dead, those who have suffered, and those who must pick up the pieces. Despair inhabits nearly every verse, and although God is invoked, there is little sign that deliverance is at hand.

Since the Middle Ages, passages from the Lamentations have been sung at Christian services during the three-day period between Maundy Thursday and Holy Saturday. The verses appointed for Maundy Thursday describe Zion, the city of God, as a desolate widow, who “weeps in the night...[since] all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they are become her enemies” (v. 2). Couperin’s three Tenebrae “lessons” are additionally framed by two traditional non-scriptural texts: “Incipit lamentatio Jeremiae prophetae” (“Here begins the lamentation of Jeremiah the prophet”) and “Jerusalem, convertere Dominum Deum tuum” (“Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God”).

One other note about these texts: each verse in the Vulgate Latin translation begins with the next Hebrew letter in the latter language’s normal sequence, from Aleph and Beth onwards, so that four of the five chapters in the original Hebrew text of Lamentations form acrostics. Most musical settings, including the present works, set these initial Hebrew letters to music, as incipits to each Latin verse. Couperin provides untexted melismas in the vocal part for each letter, as a kind of elaborate sung rubric for the whole.

Around Couperin’s three Tenebrae lessons, this program offers meditative selections from his Parisian successors. The *Prelude, Fugue and Variation* is one of **César Franck**’s most unassuming works. Its introspective character is the antithesis of most nineteenth-century French organ music; its classically-inspired form reflects instead the composer’s relative conservatism. And yet, this is one of the most hauntingly beautiful works ever to come from the pen of the great organist of the Basilique Sainte-Clotilde. Franck combines two genres in this piece: the prelude and fugue and the theme and variation. His unique solution to the ordering of these three movements makes his fugue the compositional and dramatic focal point of the whole.

**Jehan Alain**’s idiosyncratic music makes one wonder what he might have written had he not died so young, a victim of combat during World War II. Legions of devotees (including his sister Marie-Claire Alain, one of my own teachers) have ensured his art’s survival through multiple editions and recordings. His *Petit pièce* and *Lamento* each convey a specific mood, without much preamble or discursiveness. His *Aria*, by contrast, is an episodic work with a web of hypnotic ideas that betray the composer’s affinity for both jazz and music of the Far East.

**Olivier Messiaen**’s *Le Banquet céleste*, finally, is the composer’s own organ arrangement of part of his (unpublished) orchestral work *Le Banquet eucharistique* from the 1920s. As he often did, Messiaen attached an epitaph to this work, chosen from scripture: “He who eats my body and drinks my blood dwells in me and I in him” (John 6:56). The tempo indication of “very slow, ecstatic” brings a certain timelessness and mystery to this otherwise quite modest work.

© Matthew Dirst



## ARTIST BIOS



Soprano **Julia Fox** embraces opera, concert and chamber performances, and premiering new music. She works to offer an “excellent performance” (Gramophone) “with dazzling effect” (Pittsburgh Stage Review) wherever she sings. As featured soloist she has appeared locally with Mercury, Ars Lyrica, Aperio, and others; internationally in some of the world’s great venues, including the Vatican, the National Cathedral, and Carnegie Hall; and on recordings with labels Navona, Parma, and Raven. Her recent stage work includes three Strauss roles — Aminta, Italienische Sanger, and Najad (cover) — with Opera Theater Pittsburgh; her house debut with Opera in the Heights as Amore (*Orfeo ed Euridice*) and her return this season as Pamina (*Die Zauberflote*); playing Gretel in the critically acclaimed new production of *Hansel and Gretel* (Humperdinck) with Rec Room Arts; creating Helen (in Sawyer’s *The Scarlet Professor*, Mendenhall Center) and both Angelina and Gina (in Buller’s *The Pastry*

*Prince and The Puffed-Up Prima Donna*, with Houston Grand Opera’s *Opera to Go!*); and playing Cinderella (in Sondheim’s *Into the Woods*), Mabel (in Sullivan’s *Pirates of Penzance*), and Minnie (in Wilder’s *The Matchmaker*) with Tapestry Players. A native Houstonian, she studied music at HSPVA and Amherst College, apprenticed with the Brentano Quartet and Peobody Trio, and held young artist fellowship positions with Da Camera and SongFest.



**Dominique McCormick** is a lyric soprano from Long Island, New York. She is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, Aaron Copland School of Music, and the Conservatoire National de Region Boulogne-Billancourt in France. Performing in the United States and Europe, her roles include: Gretel in Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*; Laetitia in Menotti’s *The Old Maid and the Thief*; Susanna in Mozart’s *Le Nozze di Figaro*; Sola Myrrhis in Messenger’s *Coup de Roulis*; Lady Marian in De Koven’s *Robin Hood*; and Hanna Glavari in Lehár’s *The Merry Widow*. As soloist, works include: Pergolesi’s *Stabat Mater*; Mozart’s *Mass in c minor* and *Requiem*, Brahms’s *Requiem*; Handel’s *Messiah* and *Dixit Dominus*; Bach’s *Mass in b minor*, *Magnificat*, and *St. Matthew Passion*; Poulenc’s *Gloria*; Mendelssohn’s *Psalm 42* and *Lauda Sion*; recitalist for Les Musicales de Normandie and Les Nuits de Cheronne. Currently completing her doctoral dissertation in music, Dominique is newly relocated to the Houston area.



**Barrett Sills**, prizewinning cellist in competitions in Germany, France, and Brazil, is also a recognized artist on Baroque cello and viola da gamba. As a scholarship student at Yale University, he was the first recipient of the prestigious Maxwell Belding Award given by the Yale School of Music. He performed with the Nouvel Philharmonic of Radio France in Paris and taught at the Conservatoire National de Boulogne-Billancourt. Barry has performed chamber music throughout France and Germany and toured Japan with the New York Symphonic Ensemble. As recitalist, he toured South America as an Artistic Ambassador. He was co-founder and artistic director of Camerata Ventapane, which presented concerts in Houston and Mexico. For six consecutive years he was artistic director of the Festival de Musica Barroca in San Miguel de Allende. Barry serves as principal cellist of both Houston Ballet and Houston Grand Opera Orchestras.



St Philip Organist **Matthew Dirst** is Professor of Music at the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston, and Artistic Director of Ars Lyrica Houston. He is the first American to win major international prizes in both organ and harpsichord, including the National Guild of Organists Young Artist Competition (1990) and the Warsaw International Harpsichord Competition (1993). Widely admired for his stylish playing and conducting of Baroque music especially, Dirst’s recordings of music by Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti and J. A. Hasse with Ars Lyrica Houston, on the Naxos and Sono Luminus labels, have earned a Grammy nomination for Best Opera (2011) and widespread critical acclaim. His degrees include a PhD in musicology from Stanford University and the *prix de virtuosite* in both organ and harpsichord from the Conservatoire National de Reuil-Malmaison, France, where he spent two years as a Fulbright scholar. Equally active as a scholar, his work on Bach and Bach

reception includes *Engaging Bach: The Keyboard Legacy from Marpurg to Mendelssohn* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) and *Bach and the Organ* (University of Illinois Press, 2016).

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### PROGRAM COVER IMAGE —

**Pietà** | Roy de Maistre (1894–1968) | 1950 | oil paint on canvas | 45” x 60”

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