

# In Tribute to Glenn Gould ... the Organ

"The organ was a great influence, not only on my later taste in repertoire, but I think also on the physical manner in which I tried to play the piano."



Photo credit: Page Toles

The image you see above is at once familiar and unfamiliar: at age 12, here is the greatest musician and musical mind this country has ever produced: at the keyboard, reading a musical score with characteristic intent and vision. Seated here, at the console of the Concert Hall organ at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto in 1945 (the year after Healey Willan gave him excellent marks and medals for both Grade VI and VIII organ), Gould (1932-82) reveals the little-known presence of the organ in his early musical formation – a presence he frequently mentioned throughout one of the most extraordinary international careers any Canadian musician, indeed perhaps any pianist before or since, has known.

These three unique concerts offer a glimpse into this important but little-known aspect of Gould, employing three of Gould's country-folk... fine Canadian artists specially approached for their interests and abilities to develop and present them for Stratford Summer Music. Enjoy!

- John A. Miller, Artistic Producer  
Stratford Summer Music

## Concert I – Gould and Bach: The Art of the Fugue

Thu 2 August, 11:15am  
Luc Beauséjour, organ

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

**Prelude and Fugue in D major**, BWV 874 (WTC, vol. 2)

**Die Kunst der Füge (The Art of Fugue)**, BWV 1080

Contrapunctus I  
Contrapunctus II  
Contrapunctus III  
Contrapunctus IV  
Contrapunctus V  
Contrapunctus VI  
Contrapunctus VII  
Contrapunctus VIII  
Contrapunctus IX

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It is not known whether the suggestion to record Bach's final masterpiece *Die Kunst der Fuge* on the organ was Glenn Gould's, or Columbia Records'. Whatever its genesis in Gould's formational relationship with the organ or other factor, it was released (as Volume I in a set of projected organ recordings) to disastrous acclaim. Gould's student friend John Beckwith brought forth one of the most memorable condemnations: "Gould's approach seems downright unmusical, and the image it evokes for me is of the trained seal who beeps out 'God Save the Queen' on a set of car horns."

The nine Contrapuncti that appear were recorded in late January and early February of 1962 on a new neo-Baroque organ by Casavant Frères at All Saints' Kingsway Anglican Church (Toronto), and on February 21<sup>st</sup> on the Theological College Chapel Organ in New York. Instead of any of the numerous extant organ arrangements Gould used the ubiquitous "Peters" piano transcription of Carl Czerny. Indeed, he told an interviewer in 1977:

*"I'll let you in on a secret in regard to the organ record: it was done literally without practising on this instrument at all; my preparation for [it] was on the piano exclusively, [...] and I set up registrations only at the last minute."*

In 1981, Bruno Monsaingeon included Gould's performance of the final incomplete Contrapunctus XIV (not heard today) in his film trilogy, "Glenn Gould Plays Bach." At measure 239, where Bach was unable to finish, Gould snatches up his arm and holds it aloft as the picture freezes... it is a striking and unforgettable image of respect for Bach at the point where this particular work, its composer's career and life came to an end.

## Concert II – Gould's Ideal Performance

Fri 3 August, 11:15am  
Maxine Thévenot, organ

**Sellingers Rownde** (1591) William Byrd (1543-1623)

**Sonata No. 2** (1937) Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)

**from 11 Chorale Preludes** Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Opus 122 (posthumous)  
IX. Herzlich tut mich verlangen  
X. Herzlich tut mich verlangen  
III. O Welt, ich muss dich lassen

**Fantasia in d minor** Jan Pietszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)

**Sonate für Orgel** (1941) Arnold Schönberg (1874-1951)  
Zwei Fragmente (Two fragments)

**Sonate für Orgel** (1941) Ernst Křenek (1900-1991)  
Op. 92, No. 1

**Sonata in F minor** Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)  
Op. 65, No. 1

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In a January 1965 letter to the Reverend William Glenesk who had urged him to give an organ concert, Gould mentioned shoulder troubles he had experienced in the 1962 organ recording of *The Art of Fugue*, and stated:

"...except for finishing the *Art of Fugue* at some future date which can be suitably removed from piano playing for some several weeks, I am determined to do no organ concerts in the foreseeable future."

His determination was successful: one of Canada's greatest musicians, whose professional recital debut was on the organ of Toronto's Eaton Auditorium in 1945, neither completed the 1962 recording of the *Art of Fugue*, nor ever performed or recorded on the organ again.

Yet, Gould's own writings and other research by many scholars reveal Gould's ongoing interest in the King of Instruments: today's concert draws from the organ works Gould regularly presented on the piano (Byrd, Sweelinck), the works of Germanic organ composers Gould especially admired (Hindemith, Brahms, Schönberg, Křenek) and one of the six great Mendelssohn Organ Sonatas: perhaps the most fully-conceived project which we know Gould hoped one day to perform or record on the organ.

## Concert III – Gould’s Youthful Performance

Sat 4 August, 11:15am

Christopher Dawes, organ

Choristers of St. Michael’s Choir School, Toronto

Stephen Hegedus, conductor

Thomas Sanders Dupuis (1733-1796)

### Organ Concerto Movement in G

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

### Romanze (Eine Kleine Nachtmusic)

Alec Rowley (1892-1958)

### Benedictus

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

### O Salutaris Hostia

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

**In dir ist Freude** (“In Thee is Gladness”), BWV 615

**Bist du bei Mir**, BWV 508

**Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu** (“I Call upon Thee, Lord Jesus”)

BWV 639

**O Jesuslied Süß** (“O Little One Sweet”)

**Jesus bleibet meine Freude** (“Jesus, Joy of Man’s Desiring”)

BWV 147

**Prelude & Fugue in A minor**, BWV 543

In this series, Concerts I and II concerned themselves with Gould’s “organ activity” (real and imagined) in the realm of recordings. In Concert III we reach back into the world of live performance Gould abandoned in his later life, to one of the talented teenager’s last organ concerts on June 8<sup>th</sup> 1947, with the choristers, and at the organ of Grace Church-on-the-Hill, Toronto. Aged 15, Gould was widely celebrated as a prodigy of the organ and piano, but probably still unsuspecting of coming stardom on the international stage.

Soloist and accompanist **Christopher Dawes**, Director of Stratford Summer Music’s organ programming since 2001, has researched Gould and the organ, authored the 1999 play “Two Musics in Mind” about Gould and Bach, and coincidentally held positions at both Grace Church-on-the-Hill and All Saints’ Kingsway Anglican Church. He will host today’s performance.

Montréal harpsichordist and organist **Luc Beauséjour** leads a very active performing schedule that has taken him to France, the United States, Austria, Germany, Hungary, Belgium, and Bermuda. He has performed in numerous festivals, including the Festival d’Uzès (France), the Lanaudière International Festival, the Festival d’Ambronay, the festival Un été à Bourges, the Lamèque Early Music Festival (New Brunswick), and the Vancouver Early Music Festival. He was invited to perform the Goldberg Variations at the Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto for a CBC commemoration of the great pianist’s birthday. Born in Rawdon, Quebec, Mr. Beauséjour holds a Doctorate from the Université de Montréal.

**Maxine Thévenot**, a native of Saskatchewan, holds Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in organ performance from the Manhattan School of Music, where she was twice-awarded the Bronson Ragan Award for ‘most outstanding organist’. She also holds the Associate diplomas from the Royal Canadian College of Organists and the Royal Conservatory of Music. Ms Thévenot has performed as a soloist and chamber musician throughout Europe, Great Britain, and North America at many prestigious churches, concert halls and festivals. She serves as Associate Organist-Choir Director at St. John’s Cathedral in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and on the National Board of Examiners of the American Guild of Organists.

**Christopher Dawes** is a freelance musician, writer and consultant known across North America, Great Britain and Europe. A Fellow of the Royal Canadian College of Organists, he spent 12 years at the organ of Toronto’s St. James’ Cathedral, and now serves on Music and Drama faculties of the University of Toronto, and as Director of Canada’s Summer Institute of Church Music. Mr. Dawes is Lead Musician for the Church of St. George-the-Martyr, and one of Toronto’s most sought-after choral accompanists. He and Peter Tiefenbach will reprise his 1999 play “Two Musics in Mind” (Gould meets Bach) next week at the Niagara International Chamber Music Festival, and then in October at Toronto’s 4<sup>th</sup> International Bach Festival.

**St. Michael’s Choir School** is a Catholic community educating young Christian gentlemen through an experience of liturgical music praising God in Jesus Christ. Every weekend, for 10 months of the year, all boys, Grades 5 through 12, sing in one of the four cathedral choirs. As well, all students study piano and theory with a view to learning organ, guitar or strings. The School’s director is Father John Marc Missio, and its senior choral instructor, Jerzy Cichocki. Today’s program features just a few of the choristers of SMCS: the entire 130-voice school group will return to Stratford for Stratford Summer Music’s annual Christmas concert on Friday December 7<sup>th</sup>.

Bass-baritone **Stephen Hegedus**, a graduate of St. Michael’s Choir School and the University of Toronto, pursued further studies in Italy at La Musica Lirica and at the Britten Pears Young Artist Programme in Aldeburgh, England. Stephen holds a Master of Music in Opera, an Honours Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance, and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of Toronto. Later in August Mr. Hegedus will join the Atelier lyrique of l’Opéra de Montréal.



## ORGAN CONCERTS

# AT

## STRATFORD SUMMER MUSIC

7<sup>th</sup> Annual Session

August 2 – 4, 2007

**Knox Presbyterian Church**  
Stratford, Ontario, Canada

**Luc Beauséjour**, organ

**Maxine Thevenot**, organ

**Christopher Dawes**, organ

with choristers of

**St. Michael’s Choir School, Toronto**

Stephen Hegedus, conductor

**Christopher Dawes**  
Director of Organ Programming

**Andrew Keegan Mackriell**  
Deputy Director of Organ Programming

**John A. Miller**  
Artistic Producer

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