THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MUSIC

AN ORGAN TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MESSE IN C, OP. 169 BY JOSEF GABRIEL RHEINBERGER

By

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TO MY WIFE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List	of Musical Examples	v
Abs	stract	vi
1.	ORGAN TRANSCRIPTIONS AND THE LATE ROMANTIC PERIOR)1
2.	JOSEF GABRIEL RHEINBERGER: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY AND	
	DESCRIPTION OF HIS MESSE IN C, OP. 169	6
3.	METHODOLOGY FOR TRANSCRIBING ORCHESTRAL	
	ACCOMPANIMENT FOR ORGAN	12
4.	REGISTERING ORCHESTRAL TRANSCRIPTIONS ON THE	
	ORGAN	25
COI	NCLUSION	29
MES	SSE IN C, OP. 169	
	Kyrie	33
	Gloria	43
	Credo	57
	Sanctus	72
	Benedictus	76
	Agnus Dei	82
BIB	SLIOGRAPHY	30
RI∩	OGRAPHICAL SKETCH	32

LIST OF MUSIC EXAMPLES

2.1.	Gloria Intonation	10
2.2.	Credo Intonation	.10
3.1.	Beginning transcription with melody and bass parts	.16
3.2.	Reducing string tremolandi to be playable on the organ	.18
3.3.	Simplifying passages in octaves	.19
3.4.	Simplifying passages in octaves	.20
3.5.	Making string passages subordinate to brass and woodwind theme	21
3.6.	Removing unnecessary notes	23

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this treatise is to afford churches and choirs of modest means another piece of sacred choral music that can be performed without the need for a large orchestra. This document explores the concept and issues of transcribing music that was originally scored for choir and orchestra to create a version for choir and organ. Josef Rheinberger's *Messe in C*, op. 169, a multi-movement work for choir and orchestra that had not yet been transcribed for choir and solo organ, and a valuable work of sacred music in whole or in part, has been arranged to make it performable by a choir and organist of moderate ability. Transcriptions such as Fauré's *Requiem*, Duruflé's *Requiem*, and Handel's *Messiah* served as models. The final score has been prepared using the 2005b version of Finale, a music publishing software used professionally in the music publishing business.

In addition to the final score the study provides information regarding the historical setting in which such organ transcriptions of orchestral works were especially popular, biographical information on Rheinberger, a description of the methodology used to create the arrangement, and a discussion of issues encountered by the performing organist in playing these types of transcriptions.

The organ arrangement of the Mass may be used in conjunction with other editors' previously published vocal scores. The full choral part has, however, been included with the organ part in consideration of the situation where the organist and choir director is the same person.

CHAPTER 1

ORGAN TRANSCRIPTIONS AND THE LATE ROMANTIC PERIOD

At the turn of the twentieth century developments in technology, experiments in organ design, evolving musical language, and general prosperity came together to popularize a practice that had been around in some form for more than 500 years: the organ transcription. "The popularity of the orchestra and the thirst for favorites of the orchestral repertoire were in no small measure responsible for this trend. When an orchestra was not available, the organ was the best substitute. Instant masterworks via radio and phonograph were in their infancy in the 1920s, and until these media improved in quantity and quality, the organ transcription remained an important part of the repertoire" (Ochse, 344).

The popularity of transcribing music from one instrument or group of instruments to another has diminished due to modern technology and recordings. It is no longer necessary to attend a concert hall to listen to orchestral music; one need only listen to a recording or a broadcast. This was not always the case, however. As recently as the 1920s, organists were called upon to perform, in addition to the repertoire originally conceived for the organ, arrangements of operas, symphonies, and popular music. "Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Brahms each arranged some of their own works for an instrument or combination of instruments other than the original, a particularly favorite form of transcription being that for pianoforte (2 and 4 hands) from the orchestral score" (Ellingford, vi). These arrangements made possible the performance of music in situations that would have otherwise prevented it, and they provided an added source of income for the composer. While the original instrumentation best reflects the

composers' initial intent, purism exists more in modern performers' approach to the execution of the music than it did in the composers' own times and minds.

With regard to orchestral-style organ development and the popularity of transcriptions, it is difficult to be certain which event inspired the other, as transcriptions for the organ have been around for centuries. Some of the earliest examples of keyboard arrangements are included in the *Buxheimer Orgelbuch*, a manuscript dating from the mid-fifteenth century. Johann Sebastian Bach transcribed concertos of both Johann Ernst (1664-1707) and Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) for organ solo. During the Romantic period organists such as Vincent Novello (1781-1861), Edward John Hopkins (1818-1901), and W. T. Best (1826-1897) all arranged orchestral music for organ. W. T. Best, the first organist of St. George's Hall, Liverpool, published a work titled "Arrangements for the organ from the scores of the Great Masters," which runs to over 1,000 pages, a product that clearly points to the popularity of this medium during this era (Ellingford, vi).

Pipe organs began to change quite markedly during the nineteenth century. Early developments included the systematic elimination of mixtures and mutations, as well as anything above two-foot pitch, relying heavily on eight-foot pitch (Williams / Owen, 151). "The new style [of organbuilding] was, most undisputable of all, orchestral. Here we find the common meeting ground for the followers of both Hope-Jones and Audsley. Every major builder paid homage to the orchestra as a source of inspiration. So unanimous was this trend that Audsley's distinctions between the Church Organ and the Concert-hall Organ became blurred, and the orchestra became the tonal ideal generally applied" (Ochse, 344). During this period, stops with imitative names such as cello, clarinet, saxophone, and French horn were included in specifications, almost always at eight-foot pitch.

To this end the orchestral organ was developed to its epitome in the Wanamaker organ of Philadelphia and the Atlantic City Convention Hall Organ. As described by *The Diapason* in 1943, the Wanamaker organ with its 469 ranks and 30,067 pipes contains divisions named Orchestral (38 ranks, 2,774 pipes), and String (88 ranks, 6,424 pipes). In total, "there are ninety-six ranks of mixtures, seventy-six ranks of reeds, thirteen ranks of vox humanas, 139 string ranks, fifty ranks of diapasons and ninety-five ranks of

flute..." (Ochse, 359-60). The Atlantic City organ, the largest pipe organ in the world, has Great and Choir manuals seven octaves long, and the Swell manual was six octaves long, as opposed to the standard five. The organ contains 22 divisions, including Wood Wind, String Organ No. 1, String Organ No. 2, String Organ No. 3, Brass Chorus, Fanfare, Orchestra Reeds, and Percussion (Ochse, 362-363). The purpose of this apparent excessiveness was to create a tonal palette rivaling that of the orchestra.

Despite the fact that the style of organbuilding has changed from the turn of the twentieth century, today's organists are still required to perform transcriptions of orchestral material as accompaniments to choral works.

[Recently], conductors and musical organizations have tended to shun choral performances with organ substituting for all or part of the orchestra, apparently feeling that if one can't have all the instruments, a piece shouldn't be performed. This, of course, mirrors the attitude of the organ world, where – at least until recently – organ transcriptions of orchestral works were scoffed at . . . (Vail, 68).

It is a shame that the first part of this statement is true for so many musicians. There exist far too many musical and religious organizations that are not financially capable of hiring the number of musicians it would take to perform works scored for choir and orchestra. Furthermore, individual movements of larger works are very regularly presented by church choirs during the course of worship services. The cost incurred to hire an orchestra for such a small amount of music is prohibitive. The reasonable choral conductor should consider the following points:

If budget constraints, space limitations, choirs too small to balance with full orchestra, and inadequate rehearsal time were not factors to contend with, who among us would not prefer to perform works for chorus and orchestra with the full complement of instruments rather than substituting the organ for all or part of the orchestra? There are [conductors] who still believe that the benefits of exposing their singers and audiences to the great choral-orchestral pieces even under less than ideal conditions and with modified forces far outweigh the disadvantages (Vail, 68).

The most common method of overcoming these issues in places of worship is to use the organ. While not a replacement for the orchestra, the organ is the instrument that

can most effectively be substituted for a full orchestral scoring. The question arises then: for how much orchestra should the organ substitute, and is it in good taste to rearrange music from its original orchestration?

In the 19th and 20th centuries, . . . composers have often provided more than one instrumentation for some of their works, including alternative accompaniments for choral pieces. Brahms's Psalm 13, Op. 27, for example, is scored for women's chorus, with piano or organ or strings; and he made a piano duet version of the accompaniment for his *Requiem* – which was used for the first performance of the work in English, in 1871. Indeed, the commonly published two-hand piano reductions for all of Brahms's choral-orchestral works are his own. Vaughan Williams was particularly mindful of practical considerations in many of his alternative, reduced orchestrations, such as for *Dona nobis pacem*, *Hodie*, Magnificat, and others. Barber provided a reduced orchestra version of his Prayers of Kierkegaard for a performance at the 1966 AGO National Convention in Atlanta. Duruflé made three versions of the accompaniment to his Requiem. A reduction of the orchestral score of Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* for organ, harp, and percussion (one player) is published and often performed. And for his already immensely popular Lux aeterna (1997), Morten Lauridsen has published accompaniments in three separate versions – for chamber orchestra, organ, or piano (Vail, 69).

In the case of the choral work at hand, Rheinberger himself produced two versions of his *Messe in C*, op. 169. The original scoring is for full orchestra with strings, woodwinds and brass. The second omits the wind and brass parts but provides an organ part that covers the parts omitted. The organ part is not simply a condensation of the winds but rather a re-working of these parts into an arrangement that looks and plays like a piece of organ music. It is therefore quite clear that Rheinberger was fully aware that the issues of space, time, and finances may well prevent a performing group from employing a full orchestra. While it is not clear how he would have reacted to eliminating the orchestra altogether, the fact that in this piece he already made a concession to the need for such an undertaking suggests that, if it were well done, he would likely have accepted it.

The volume of literature dealing with either the life and works of Josef Rheinberger or of transcribing orchestral music for organ is rather small. Rheinberger is best known for his organ sonatas, and it is about this topic that we have the largest body of literature. With regard to his life and his other music, the best source for information

is articles in journals and entries in musical dictionaries. Though overshadowed by his contemporaries Brahms, Wagner, and Liszt, Rheinberger deserves more attention as a composer and pedagogue, if for no other reason than his unwillingness to subscribe to either the Cecilian movement or the New German School of composition.

Literature involving the practice of transcription is also lacking. Though looked upon in many circles as not being pure and true to the music of the masters, transcription has brought to the masses music that might not otherwise have been heard at all. A descriptive process of "how to transcribe" exists only in a few texts, which date from the era of the concept at its most popular, namely the early twentieth century. The best method at this time to understand transcription is to compare transcribed scores with their original orchestrations, especially if the transcription has been rendered by the composer himself.

CHAPTER 2

JOSEF GABRIEL RHEINBERGER: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY AND DESCRIPTION OF HIS MESSE IN C, OP. 169

Josef Gabriel Rheinberger (1839-1901) is generally regarded today as a lesser composer. Organists, however, have recognized that "although, so far as his operatic, orchestral, and chamber music is concerned, Rheinberger may be described as a third-rate composer, he was a first-rank man in his organ music" (Grace, i). While best known for his organ sonatas, Rheinberger also composed large-scale sacred music, including a Mass in C major, his op. 169.

Born March 17, 1839, in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, Rheinberger was trained as an organist from the beginning. The organist and teacher Sebastian Pöhli gave the five-year-old Rheinberger his first lessons. Progressing quickly, Rheinberger was organist at the Chapel of St. Florian in Vaduz by the age of seven (Hochstein, ii), and he composed a three-part Mass with organ accompaniment in 1847 (Shenton, 315). Beginning in 1848 Rheinberger studied with Philipp Schmutzer (1821-1898), the choir director of Feldkirch, who taught him harmony, piano, and organ.

In 1851 Rheinberger's father, treasurer to the prince of Liechtenstein, decided to send the young musician to the conservatory in Munich, a move that permanently relocated the young Josef to Germany. There he studied piano with Julius Emil Leonhard (1810-1883), organ with Georg Herzog (1822-1909), and counterpoint with Julius Joseph Maier (1821-1889). When he graduated in 1854, he became a private student of Franz Lachner (1803-1890) (Shenton, 315). From 1860 to 1866 he was the organist at the court church of St. Michael in Munich, and from 1864 to 1877 he was the conductor of the Munich Oratorienverein, where he proved himself to be a capable choral conductor. He

also worked as a coach for the court opera, witnessing the premiere of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (Gmeinweiser, 257).

1867 saw two important events in Rheinberger's life. In April he married a gifted poet and his former pupil, Franziska von Hoffnaass (1832-1892). In the fall he was appointed as the professor of composition and organ at the Munich Conservatory, where he remained until his death (Hochstein, ii).

Rheinberger was appointed Hofkapellmeister in 1877, a position that gave him strong influence over the direction of sacred music in Munich (Gmeinweiser, 258). He was granted the Knighthood of St. Michael in 1894 by King Ludwig of Bavaria, and the Knighthood of St. Gregory the Great by Pope Leo XIII, to whom he had dedicated a Mass in Eight Parts (Shenton, 315), and in 1899 the University of Munich awarded him an honorary doctorate. He died on November 25, 1901, a few weeks after his retirement, and was buried beside his wife in Munich. Their graves were disturbed during World War II, however, and since 1950 they have been buried in Vaduz (Gmeinweiser, 258).

American musicians and musical scholars such as George Whitefield Chadwick (1854-1931), Horatio Parker (1863-1919), Frederick Shepherd Converse (1871-1940), Arthur Battelle Whiting (1861-1936), and about sixty other American musicians (Bomberger, 53-54), and European musicians such as Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921), Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari (1876-1948), Wilhelm Fürtwangler (1886-1954), Ludwig Thuille (1861-1907), and Giuseppi Buonamici (1846-1914) (Shenton, 315) all benefited from the teaching of Rheinberger. While he personally disliked the work of Wagner and Liszt, Rheinberger never attempted to influence his students with his personal views. He held tightly to tradition as a composer, drawing from the music of Bach, Mozart, and middle-period Beethoven for inspiration, and therefore "he encouraged his students to write absolute music rather than program music and to avoid the seemingly aimless harmonic experiments of the late Romantics" (Bomberger, 56).

Today his music is chiefly remembered by organists and choirmasters, especially through what is arguably his most highly individual body of work, the 20 organ sonatas, and through his sacred music "in which he went his own way in contrast to the stylistic inflexibility of followers of the Cecilian movement" (Gmeinweiser, 258).

During the nineteenth century the Cecilian movement within Catholic Church music aimed to restore a Palestrina-like "purity" to liturgical music. Although he was influenced by this movement, Rheinberger did not follow the movement's requirements to the letter, and as a result his mass settings were not added to the list of works that the Cecilian Society regarded as suitable music for the liturgy (Hochstein, iii).

Rheinberger's sacred vocal music includes eighteen settings of the Mass, four Requiem Masses, five Stabat Mater settings, four oratorios, and a great many hymns, motets, and offertories (Shenton, 315). Rheinberger's Mass in C, op. 169, can be traced back to a sketchbook of 1882, where he first set the theme for the Kyrie on paper, but further dating of sketchbooks and autograph copies of his composition show that Rheinberger began working on the Mass in earnest in May 1891, having completed the initial draft by the 31st of the month. It was not until early 1892 that he completed the Mass to his satisfaction. The first complete presentation of the work was on Easter Sunday 1893, at the Cathedral of St. Gallen, Switzerland (Hochstein, iii, iv).

As mentioned earlier, this composition was scored in two versions, one for choir and orchestra, and one for choir, string orchestra, and organ, in which the organ plays an adaptation of the orchestral wind parts. In his "Comments for the Director" Rheinberger states, "The organ part can be a worthy substitute for the wind instrument parts. The brass, not obligatory, are only needed with larger performing forces" (Hochstein, 91). Utilizing a six-movement format of Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei, Rheinberger set the traditional Greek and Latin texts for four-part choir and SATB soloists.

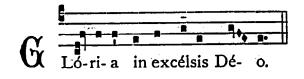
The Kyrie is in ABA form, with an obbligato violin part consisting of primarily eighth notes. Rheinberger set the choral parts for the "Kyrie" sections in homophonic texture, but he used imitation for the theme of the "Christe." To further contrast this middle section, the choir is initially reduced to soloists, and the prominence of the violin part is reduced. The moment of recapitulation is clear, and the first eight measures of the reprise are almost identical to those of the beginning.

The initial phrase of "Gloria in excelsis Deo" is to be intoned by a soloist. The choral Gloria begins with a unison ascending melodic theme, and then repeats the theme, harmonized, setting the text "et in terra pax." The preface to the full score suggests an

adaptation of the opening theme of this Gloria for the intonation. The actual music for this suggestion is missing, however. A second intonation suggestion is from the *Mass for Doubles* found on page 26 of the *Liber usualis* (Example 2.1) (Hochstein, vi.). During the text "Domine fili unigenite," the violin part is reminiscent of the obbligato in the Kyrie. The texture changes again at "qui sedes ad dexteram Patris," where the vocal force is reduced to soloists. A return to the opening ascending theme restores the choral tutti at "Quoniam tu solus sanctus." The fugue for the remaining text beginning with "Cum sancto spiritu" is only three measures shorter than the preceding section, but it is marked with a faster tempo, effectively shortening the duration of this half of the movement. Rheinberger included a counter-subject from the beginning of the fugue, at measure 166 the subject appears in stretto, and at 189 the coda quotes the opening ascending line.

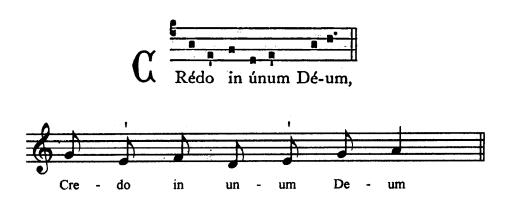
The Credo, like the Gloria, is to have its first line of text intoned. The suggestion given in the score preface is from *Liber usualis*, page 64 (Example 2.2). The Credo is the first movement not composed in C major but is rather in C minor. The first six measures are sung in unison, followed by primarily homophonic material with brief sections of imitation. Again, the violins present an obbligato theme stylistically similar to the previous two movements. At measure 36, the text "Et incarnatus est," the vocal parts are again reduced to soloists, the key shifts to C major, and the violins interject the opening notes of the chant "Salve Regina." Full choir returns for the text "crucifixus," and the descending chord progression from G major to E-flat major, unprecedented in this Mass, emphasizes the text. Following four statements of an ascending theme on the text "et resurrexit" and a return to the original tempo, the key returns to C minor and the composition returns to its opening material. Measure 101 changes key back to C major and sets the text of "et vitam venturi saeculi, amen," accompanied by chords in the winds and rapidly ascending string passages.

The Sanctus, in E-flat major, contrasts the opening movements in its relative calmness. This contrasting mood is maintained until the "Osanna in excelsis" section is reached. Rheinberger then increases the motion by introducing faster repeated notes in the strings.





Example 2.1. Gloria Intonation.



Example 2.2. Credo Intonation.

As the counterpart to the Sanctus, the Benedictus is composed in A-flat major and opens with soloists instead of full choir. While the movement is not a fugue, imitation is utilized throughout. At the return of the "Osanna in excelsis" the tutti choir enters. Rheinberger does not use the thematic material of the Sanctus but rather maintains independence within the Benedictus movement, which ends as it began thematically.

The tripartite text of the Agnus Dei is emphasized by the three key areas in which each section begins: C major, F major, and E-flat major. A rocking violin obbligato accompanies the choral writing, which, while largely homophonic, employs imitation at each statement of the text "miserere nobis." Creating a decided sense of finality, the closing 43 measures of this movement for which the text is "dona nobis pacem" constitute a fugue over a C pedal-point. The main subject is embellished by an accompanying string figuration of sixteenth notes and syncopated rhythms.

The soloists' writing is stylistically the same as the choral writing. The solos function exclusively as a textural change, and there are neither extended solos for individual voices nor soloists singing with the choir. The vocal range for the sopranos is significant. The part reaches high A in almost every movement, and twice in the Mass the part reaches high B-flat. The voicing of the remainder of the vocal parts is typical; however, the bass soloist must sing a low E-flat.

Lasting approximately one half hour, this Mass setting presents no significant rhythmic or harmonic difficulties to the singers. All editions maintain the original Latin text without attempted translations. While the Mass is cohesive in its entirety, individual movements may stand independently. The only possible exception to this is the separate settings of the Sanctus and Benedictus, which, due to the text, are usually sung together.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY FOR TRANSCRIBING ORCHESTRAL ACCOMPANIMENT FOR ORGAN

Choral works such as Handel's *Messiah*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Haydn's *Creation*, and Dubois's *The Seven Last Words of Christ* have continually found favor with church musicians and congregations alike. Every year, countless performances of these works, in whole or in part, are given throughout the world in churches by volunteer choirs. Rarely, however, are these performances given with the original orchestration. In fact, issues of period instruments and historical performance practices are rarely considered by the average volunteer performing group. Furthermore, more often than not, the accompanist plays from the reduction given in the vocal score. These concessions are made primarily because the cost of hiring a minimal orchestra of competent musicians would exceed these churches' annual music budgets.

Recognizing the fact that there are many churches where performing a sacred work of this scope with original instrumentation is financially prohibitive, attempts are often made by publishers and arrangers to create not just a rehearsal score, but rather a "piano score." While these scores usually succeed in capturing the rhythm, tonality, and thematic material of the orchestra, they are often poorly suited to a pipe organ, the instrument most commonly associated with traditional sacred choral music. "Often the organist will simply play the piano reduction on the organ as best [as] he or she can, the result being a constant doubling of the string parts as well as hit-or-miss covering of the wind parts where they happen to be included in the reduction" (Vail, 70). The piano has become the instrument of choice for these rehearsal scores because the piano is the common instrument in a rehearsal space, the number of people who have moderate piano

skills far exceeds the number of capable organists, and it is indeed rare to find a performance hall without a piano, but those with pipe organs are much harder to find. Furthermore, if the work is ultimately to be sung with an orchestra, the piano is the more practical instrument to be used in rehearsal for all the above reasons.

Dudley Buck's 1877 handbook "Choir Accompaniment" states,

A knowledge of the . . . subject is indispensable to a good organist, for, perhaps, not one half of the compositions performed in our churches have accompaniments suitably written for the organ. Those suited only to the piano abound, even in compositions whose vocal character may render them worthy of church use. This state of things is unfortunate, for the player who may have tried the piece over upon the piano finds, upon coming to the organ, that the accompaniment falls off greatly in effect, and not unfrequently [sic] sounds simply detestable if played literally as written. Still, such pieces are expected to find their principal use in church with organ accompaniment; therefore the player has to adapt the same to his instrument as best he may. A woful [sic] amount of ignorance seems to exist as to the different ways by which an accompanist may help himself in this respect (Buck, 90).

The respected publisher Bärenreiter has taken note of this issue and instituted a commissioned "Choir & Organ" series of these very types of transcriptions, including music of Vivaldi, Fauré, Schubert, C. P. E. Bach, and Mozart.

Adapting accompaniments for considerations of practicality, however, is not a new concept. While Louis Vierne was writing his *Messe solenelle*, his teacher, Charles-Marie Widor, suggested that he re-write the orchestral accompaniment for organ, for the reason that while many churches had two organs (common in large French churches), most were not able to supply an orchestra. Maurice Duruflé transcribed the accompaniment of his Requiem from orchestra to organ, and Gabriel Fauré's Requiem and Théodore Dubois's *The Seven Last Words of Christ* have similarly been arranged by others. Consequently, these latter two works have become very popular among church choirs because of their accessibility.

The current trend is for academic and municipal choral directors to perform music with an accompaniment as close to the original as feasible. But for church choirs, performances of such pieces as *Messiah* "accompanied by organ alone are still, of course, ubiquitous; and performances of other popular choral-orchestral works using organ only

in place of orchestra may also be heard – though not nearly as often as in the first half of this century" (Vail, 68). It is perplexing then, why more choral-orchestral works, especially those with sacred texts, have not been transcribed for choir and organ, relieving organists of the need to sight-adapt or spend hours preparing their piano scores to be more idiomatic to the organ.

The very concept of transcription may best be summed up as follows: "Transcription is not the imitation or reproduction of exactly similar effects. It is rather a re-writing of the original form in order that the melodic and rhythmic phrases and figures, the harmonic background, and all the principal features may be distributed as far as possible, to suit the altered conditions of production or presentation. Transcription, as a distinct art, is only possible, so far as instrumental music is concerned, when the instruments for which the music is to be arranged are mechanically and tonally sufficient for the purpose" (Ellingford, vii). Sir Hubert Parry writes, "The object of arrangement is to make that which was written in one musical language intelligible in another" (as quoted in Ellingford, vi).

The organ, as a wind-driven instrument itself, lends itself most readily to the imitation of orchestral winds. There are at least three possible solutions for creating a musically satisfying performance using organ in place of winds but with strings: "(1) editing the published piano-vocal score with a red pencil, circling the parts that are to be played, writing in the parts that are missing, and carefully registrating [sic] the entire score for the organ on which it is to be played; (2) making an entirely new score of the wind parts transcribed for organ; [(3) a] very convenient solution would be to use a published transcription [of the wind parts] if one is available" (Vail, 70). This, while a good possibility for concert settings of small organizations, is still likely to be outside the realm of financial possibility for church settings, especially when movements of choral and orchestral works are used as regular Sunday anthems. Therefore, the most practical use of the time of the transcriber would be to forgo this noble effort to leave as much as possible of the orchestration intact, and to create a tasteful adaptation requiring just one organist to provide the accompaniment.

The introduction to Ellingford's book *The Art of Transcribing for the Organ* closes with a passage that provides a valuable starting point for anyone who endeavors to transcribe orchestral music for organ (Ellingford, 3):

It would be very difficult to formulate rules for a subject which has so many facets, but the subjoined suggestions or guides may help to elucidate some problems in transcribing orchestral accompaniments for the organ.

- 1. Eliminate the *unessential*, and lay out the *essential* to the best advantage on the organ.
- 2. Aim at simplicity and avoid complexity.
- 3. Complex and involved passages, though they may be technically playable on the organ, should be altered and rewritten, *unless the effect is artistic*.
- 4. Avoid the exact reproduction of any idiom peculiar to one particular class or group of orchestral instruments, which is not artistic and effective in the transcribed medium.
- 5. *Alter* the context or figures of an instrumental part, rather than reproduce an idiom which does not belong to the organ.
- 6. Avoid rapid repetitions either of single or double notes. These repetitions may often be technically or mechanically possible at a great speed on an organ but they can never sound really well, because at the high speed one note will run into the other, and this merging of one sound into the next, results in the effect of one continuous sound, or at best, a sustained wobble!
- 7. Try to reproduce the spirit of the score not the letter.

The first step in preparing an organ transcription is to familiarize oneself as completely as possible with the piece of music at hand. One must study the score and listen to performances as much as possible. If one cannot hear live performances of the work, listening to as many quality recordings as possible with score and without is imperative. The purpose of this process is to look and listen for important rhythmic and harmonic moments and melodic motifs. If there are already one or more versions of the accompaniment, especially those arranged by the composer, it helps to study and listen to them, as composers often will make it clear through their own arrangements what they felt was the most important material. Ultimately, one wants to reach the point where one has completely internalized the music. Once this point has been reached, one will more easily distill the salient features from the score and place them on paper.

One should begin a transcription with the bass and melody parts, if they indeed are given to the orchestra (Example 3.1). This process is similar to writing out figured



Example 3.1. Beginning transcription with melody and bass parts. Kyrie: mm. 1-4.

bass realizations. Once the foundation and melody are placed on the page, all other material must fit somehow within that framework. Since one is transcribing existing material, voice-leading problems should not arise yet.

At this point, the issues of adapting to the organ figurations that are idiomatic to another instrument should be addressed. String writing can often be problematic. String instruments are often given passages of quick repetition, which give great power and sense of motion. The same technique would be clumsy on the piano, if playable at all because of the limitations of keyboard actions, and likely incapable of clear speech on the organ. Rapid scale passages in thirds or sixths for strings are cumbersome on the piano and ineffective on the organ. A tremolo of notes or chords for strings has a totally different effect on the organ, sounding comical (Ellingford, vii). These passages must be dealt with according to their context. Quickly repeated notes may simply be combined and played as their collective note values (Example 3.2). Parallel scale passages may present themselves at a point where the scales could be performed with two hands, if no other significant material is presented within the orchestra at that time. If, however, a pattern of thirds or sixths continues for a number of measures, it may be advisable to leave out the inner voice and simply aim for what may be perceived as the effect of restlessness and vigorous movement. Melodies duplicated at the octave are best eliminated when there is other rhythmic and harmonic material (Examples 3.3, 3.4). Above all, clarity and practicality need to be the goal of the transcription. Therefore, judicious deletion of extra notes should be considered. The final product must reflect the original while trying to be idiomatic to the organ.

An important consideration is the dynamic range of an orchestra. An indication of *pianissimo* for the string parts may result in a dynamic softer than the woodwinds' *pianissimo*. Conversely, the indication of *fortissimo* for the brass will certainly dominate the sound of the orchestra. The orchestration may well be a swirling string pattern that is an accompaniment to a brass and/or woodwind theme. In such an instance, the string part will sound subordinate, and therefore, regardless of its notated dynamics, can most likely be simplified (Example 3.5). The goal for the transcriber is to eliminate difficult passages which may well not be heard anyway. Here again, listening to the piece will



Example 3.2. Reducing string tremolandi to be playable on the organ. Credo: mm. 98-99.



Example 3.3. Simplifying passages in octaves. Gloria: mm. 12-15.



Example 3.4. Simplifying passages in octaves. Credo: mm. 28-31.



Example 3.5. Making string passages subordinate to brass and woodwind theme. Credo: mm. 101-104.

help the transcriber to appreciate which notes are more prominent and to eliminate those which are not.

After the notes are on the page, the next step is for the transcriber to attempt to perform the transcription – a simple practice frequently ignored. It may be found that a better effect can be created by eliminating some repeated notes (Example 3.6), or combining some but not all of the notes of an arpeggio into a chord. Figures that sounded clear and important in the orchestra may be swallowed up by the timbre of the organ or the acoustics of the room and therefore need adjusting. If possible, one should ask other organists to try playing through the score. A passage that the transcriber finds easy may well be problematic for another organist and vice-versa. A self-made recording of the music can also be very telling, as it removes one's focus from the page and re-directs it to the ear. Many subtle errors can be detected this way. Also, listening to a recording while following the new score can be advantageous; the score should look like the music sounds.

Issues of basic registration should be addressed at this time. The transcriber needs to consider at what point separate manuals should be employed. Where registration is concerned, one must remember that every pipe organ sounds and functions differently. To this end, basic suggestions work far better than names of particular stops. If a particular solo stop is to be used, such as an oboe, then it should be marked as such. However, while one instrument and performing hall may require the additional use of a certain stop in the ensemble to add clarity or body, that sound may be overbearing and obtrusive on another instrument. It is better to be more general than specific, for there are organists who will simply draw the stops suggested without regard to the musical result. Another useful piece of information to the performer might be the inclusion of original instrumentation indications where figures were given to either specific instruments or sections of the orchestra.

Sources for suggestions of registration are the organ literature and choral literature that was originally intended to be accompanied by organ. The composers who most regularly approached the sounds of the organ similarly to that of an orchestra were those of the French Romantic period. Suggested registrations of César Franck (1822-1890), Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937), and Louis Vierne (1870-1937) are quite



Example 3.6. Removing unnecessary notes. Agnus Dei: mm. 93-96.

specific. German composers of the same period, Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847), Rheinberger (1839-1901), and Max Reger (1873-1916), gave more information in the form of dynamics than actual registration. These composers' instruments were designed in such a way as to encourage these registration concepts. Modern organists, however, play on instruments that are designed to play a broad spectrum of literature, and therefore they must listen to whether or not the suggested registration succeeds. Further details of this topic are discussed in the following chapter.

For the transcriber, experimentation is vital. Music that looks good on paper may prove to be unmusical in practice and require a different approach. Simply copying orchestral parts into a reduction score has produced many unplayable scores. The orchestral parts must be distilled into organ music. There is a fine, however, line between making the score playable and oversimplification. If an organist can reproduce the emotion of the original orchestration while remaining sensitive to both the original music and the organ, then the transcription is a success.

CHAPTER 4

REGISTERING ORCHESTRAL TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR THE ORGAN

Transcriptions of choral-orchestral works for organ exist in many editions, each influenced by the transcriber, his instrument, the room in which the transcription was originally intended to be presented, and the choir. These transcriptions vary in effectiveness and technical requirements. Generally, since transcriptions are intended to substitute for multiple instrumentalists, they are harder to play. They must be approached as organ literature and given the same amount of respect, if not more, to make them succeed.

Besides simply playing the notes, the most pressing issue for an organist in dealing with the performance of a transcription of orchestral music is that of registration. It is impossible to duplicate the sound of bowed strings on an instrument whose sound is produced exclusively by wind. Likewise, the timbre of "imitative" stops on the organ often fails to be consistently convincing. How, then, should an organist attempt to provide a suitable accompaniment for these works?

Early twentieth century organist Edwin H. Lemare (1865-1934), who was known both for his orchestral transcriptions and his convincing performance of them, offers insights to registration possibilities:

To represent anything resembling the strings in the orchestra a *combination* of stops is required. There is much more body in a violin than in a Viol d'orchestre or other imitative stop in the organ. Many such stops in themselves do not resemble their prototypes of the orchestra, but may be made to do so to a certain extent if the organist has mastered the art of mixing his tone-colours.

A Gamba, for instance, is a hideous-sounding stop at the best, and is only useful on a Choir organ to give predominance to the 8 feet "thin-toned" work.

... "string-toned effects." A mixture of thin-toned "Celestes," with "Vox Humana" (if soft) Tremulant, and the addition of a soft 8 feet Lieblich, is much more realistic than anything I know. But here again so much depends upon the voicing: certain combinations which would be very beautiful on an organ by one builder would be quite the reverse on that of another.

There are certain . . . imitative stops which are improved in combination with others: the Choir Clarinet, for instance, which sounds better when a soft 8 feet Lieblich is added. An Orchestral Oboe (properly voiced) with a soft 4 feet Flute can also be very beautiful.

Generally speaking, the Subs and Supers [octave couplers] are most useful in big chords on soft, string-tone stops, when one hand only is available: they ought never to be abused with the full organ or heavy-toned stops. Also, if there is only one 8 feet Tuba on the Solo organ, a Sub and Super are very acceptable, as they practically give an extra 16 and 4 feet reed; but of course the Tuba ought not to be used in more than three- or four-part harmony, when the disproportion of the 16 and 4 feet is not so noticeable.

The so-called Vox Humana stop (if it is voiced very softly) used with the Celestes, Tremulant, and a soft Lieblich, to give a little body, is a valuable addition to "String" or "Harp effects." Speaking of Harp effects, I find that a soft Lieblich of 16 feet, combined with it, helps the illusion.

We often see the instruction, "Swell to Oboe" or "Great to Principal." Whoever heard of full chords on the oboes of an orchestra, even if there were a sufficient number? (Lemare, 9, 12)

These suggestions are indicative of both a playing style and an organ building style which, while prevalent during Lemare's time, have either lost favor or disappeared completely. Rare is the organ from this period, with the tone colors Lemare suggests, where the instrument has not been modernized, revoiced, rebuilt, or fallen into disrepair from neglect and time. His comments suggest that organists were hard pressed even in his own era to find instruments with such qualities. Ultimately, Lemare offers some timeless advice, saying "one great thing to remember is contrast, viz., to endeavor to make your accompaniment of a different tone-colour from your Solo" (Lemare, 12).

Modern organists must often work with instruments that have been designed to be as accommodating as possible to the organ literature, that is, to play all periods and styles of music equally. Instruments are rarely built today where registration suggestions such as those given by Lemare are practical, if even possible. Stops such as the Vox Humana can vary greatly from instrument to instrument, and they are quite often omitted from stoplists altogether. Registering any accompaniment on the organ is subject first to a rule of musical taste: "In the field of accompaniment, Registration is paramount. Whether playing with an orchestra or ensemble, or acting as a substitute for it, the player has the greatest responsibility in the choice of stops – Registration can make or marr [sic] your efforts" (Lindley, 5).

Words often used to describe an orchestral timbre include "lush," or "rich." And it is these very qualities that Lemare and his contemporaries were trying to emulate. Neo-Baroque organs often are supplied with divisions full of bright, high-pitched stops, and few eight-foot stops. Such is also the case of many small church organs, where physical space and budget constraints are concerned. Frequently one can solve this potential registration problem by: "... mixing diapasons and flutes and coupling unison ranks together over two, three or even four manuals, which will generally produce the warmth of sound that one's playing and singing colleagues require" (Lindley, 5).

It must be remembered, however, that ultimately the registration needs to be at a volume to support but not overpower the singers, clear of speech without being too edgy, and colored with a combination of stops that allows the organist to make registration changes smoothly and subtly. Treating organ stops as orchestral instruments is a mistake. The addition of a trumpet to the organ ensemble will not have the same effect as the addition of brass instruments to the strings of an orchestra. Likewise, imitative stops with woodwind nomenclature are usually voiced to function as solo sounds, not in ensembles, with the exception of many flute stops which often function as foundation. "The organist should not, of course, try to *duplicate* the orchestral sounds, but should nonetheless attempt to approximate the instrumental colors in a *general* way when practical to do so..." (Vail, 71).

The ability for an organist to control the swell boxes effectively often becomes paramount. If, during the course of a melody, the original notes descend and crescendo, an instrument built along classic principles will often fall off in effect. Pipe organs are usually built either with dynamics that are even from top to bottom within a rank, or, often, the volume and intensity of the stop will increase toward the top of its compass.

Neither of these voicing styles will allow the melody to descend and remain prominent. Only orchestral-style organs will usually have flue stops that "bloom" toward the bottom of their compass. Depending on the texture of the accompaniment, the organist may need to take this point into consideration and adjust the swell box for the solo stop in order to allow the melody to remain equally balanced and prominent.

Certain parameters were set in the following transcription. At a minimum, the performance organ is to consist of two manuals and pedal, with one enclosed division. Use of additional manuals may be made by the organist as he sees appropriate. The keyboard compasses are expected to be within current American Guild of Organist standards of five octaves for the manual, and thirty-two notes for the pedal. Where these compasses are not available, possible amendments to the score will need to be judiciously made by the organist. Tempo markings are all original. Registrations are suggestions, and must be considered carefully by the organist and/or conductor. Familiarity with this work will aid to the success of these decisions. Making rehearsal recordings and listening to them shortly after they are made can help to avoid registrations problems. Each organ and room is different, and therefore no simple rules can be made other than to play the music not as an orchestra, but as an organist.

CONCLUSION

There are many reasons why a director or performing group may endeavor to sing a choral work in whole or in part that originally required orchestral accompaniment. It is not, however, always practical to hire the number of musicians needed to accompany these pieces properly. Whether for reasons of budget, physical space, or time, organists are often called on to provide a substitute for an orchestra. As this practice is becoming more accepted, publishers are systematically providing arrangements designed specifically for organ in addition to the already popular piano scores.

The music for which this is being done is primarily that which has either already found favor with audiences or was written by a composer with whom audiences are already familiar. There is, however, a large body of music that is largely ignored because the composers are little known. Such is the case of much of Rheinberger's music. The present treatise offers a transcription of a choral work which offers an affordable and practical way to present music that might not otherwise have been heard.

Rheinberger's *Messe in C* has already found favor with those who have helped prepare this transcription and participated in experimental performances of individual movements during the course of worship services. The choral writing has been found to be both manageable and satisfying. The transcriber hopes that this piece will gain in popularity and aid in the appreciation of Rheinberger's other music.

Suggested registration: Man I. Foundations, Strings 8' (oboe 8') Man. II Foundation 8, II-I Ped. 16, 8, II-Ped.

Messe in C Op. 169 KYRIE

JOSEF RHEINBERGER Organ transcription by JAMES EDWARD LORENZ





















GLORIA

Man. II Full to reeds Man. I Foundations Ped. Full with light reed





























CREDO

Man. II Foundations (oboe) Man I. Foundations, II-I Ped. 16, 8, II-Ped. I-Ped.































Man. II String celeste 8' Man. I Flute 8' Ped. Soft 16, 8









BENEDICTUS

Man. II flute 8, string 8 Man. I flute 8 II-I Ped. Soft 16, 8













Man. II foundations 8' Man. I light principal, II-I Ped. 16, 8, II-ped

AGNUS DEI























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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

James Edward Lorenz was born on July 28, 1974, in Kingston, New York. His first keyboard lessons were given by his grandmother Etta Doyle, when he was only 5. Having continued to progress in music through public school, he played baritone horn and eventually tuba for the school bands. He began private organ study at the age of 15 with Barbara Lottridge, the organist of the historic Old Dutch Church in the Stockade District of the City of Kingston. In 1990 he was appointed organist of the First Congregational Church in Saugerties, New York, and assumed the dual role of Organist and Choir Director a year later.

In 1992 Lorenz began his college career at Concordia College, in Bronxville, New York, under the direction of Dr. Richard Heschke. He received a Bachelor of Music degree in Church Music in 1996, graduating cum laude. In 1997 he married Jill Henry and moved to Tallahassee, Florida, to attend The Florida State University and continue study with Michael Corzine. While in Tallahassee, he was employed by Trinity United Methodist Church as the organist and helped to design and install a new pipe organ for the church. He earned a Master of Music degree in Organ Performance from The Florida State University in 2000 and immediately began work on the doctorate.

Lorenz is the Organist and Choirmaster at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Fort Myers, Florida. He has played recitals as a guest artist throughout Florida, as well as his native New York State. He is a past officer of local chapters of the American Guild of Organists and a member of Pi Kappa Lambda, the national music honor society.