

Larry Visser, a Minister of Music and Church Organist in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is a celebrated composer of sacred works. *Exodus* is a theme and variations form based on the spiritual, "When Israel Was in Egypt's Land" (Go Down, Moses). The work begins with two stanzas of the spiritual sung a cappella by an alto and bass. Six organ variations displaying the various timbres of the organ along with narrative commentary then interpret the plagues of the story.

Louis Vierne, a French organist and composer, lived from 1870 to 1937. Born nearly blind, he showed an early aptitude for music. He served as assistant organist to Charles Marie Widor at Saint-Sulpice prior to becoming the principal organist at Notre Dame in Paris. Considered one of the greatest improvisers of his day, his harmonic language reflected both romantic richness and impressionistic practices. His output for organ includes six symphonies, 24 "fantasy pieces," and 24 pieces in "free style."

Composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy was born in Germany. He was a superb pianist, a good violinist, an exceptional organist, and an inspiring conductor. It was during his visits to London that Thomas Attwood, the organist of St. Paul's, began to recognize the genius of the young composer. The two men became close friends and Mendelssohn often visited the Cathedral and played the organ voluntaries at the end of the services. The main corpus of Mendelssohn's output for the king of instruments is contained within his opuses 37 & 65. The organ duet heard this evening was also written for solo performer by Mendelssohn in his *Three Preludes and Fugues* (Op 37), dedicated to Thomas Attwood.



**Carthage**

Carthage College Music Department  
2001 Alford Park Drive  
Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140-1994

## *For His Glory*

### **An Evening of Organ Music**

*presented by*

Lauren Neverman

*in fulfillment of the music major  
with an emphasis in church music.*

*assisted by*

Sarah Gates and Tomoko Sekiguchi, registrants  
Aaron Steckman and Jennifer Cobb, vocalists  
Amber Sharp and Kate Schrubba, narrators


*and*

Michael Burkhardt, organist

Saturday, March 25, 2006

A. F. Siebert Chapel

7:30 p.m.



## Program

**Spielstücke (Thirty Pieces for Small Organ, Op. 18/1)**  
Hugo Distler (1908-1942)

**Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 645**  
J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

**Tocatta in d (Dorian), BWV 538**  
J. S. Bach

**Exodus (2002)**  
Larry Visser

Prologue  
Plague of Frogs  
Plague of Flies  
Plague of Hail, Thunder, and Lightning  
Plague of Darkness  
Plague of Death: The Passover

**Two Pieces (Twenty-four Pieces in Free Style, Op. 31)**  
Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

*Préambule*  
*Carillon*

**Fugue in c for Organ Duet**  
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

## Program Notes

A German composer mainly associated with choral music for worship, Hugo Distler was organist at St. Jacobi in Lübeck and a professor of church music at the School for Church Music in Spandau and Stuttgart. Published in 1938, his *Spielstücke* is a miniature virtuosic work characterized by its use of the pentatonic scale (a five note scale including the pitches *do, re mi, sol, and la*) as well as syncopated rhythms. This piece and his other virtuosic pieces were stigmatized by the Nazi regime as “degenerate art.” Distler committed suicide in 1942 at the age of 34.

The setting of *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* is J. S. Bach's transcription of one of his cantata movements for tenor, violin/oboe, and continuo (bass instrument and keyboard).

A countermelody is played by the right hand while the chorale (hymn) melody, *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*, is sounded in the left hand. The chorale melody and text are by Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608).

*Translation of the German Chorale Text:*

“Wake up!” The voice of the watchmen call to us from the top of the battlements, “Wake up, you city of Jerusalem!” This is the hour called midnight. They call to us with clear voices, “Where are you, wise virgins? Come! The bridegroom approaches. Get up! Take your lamps. Alleluia! Prepare yourselves for the wedding, for you must go to meet him.”

Although not always highly respected during his time, since the time of Mendelssohn, J. S. Bach has been regarded as one of the most important composers for the organ. While Bach was court organist at Weimar, he composed the majority of his organ works, including the **Tocatta in d (Dorian), BWV 538**. This work is quite a conversational piece with dialogue between the right and the left hands, between the hands and feet, and between manuals. The score is unique in that Bach included manual indications.