



Music at Trinity Celebrates the 200th Birthday of Composer César Franck
With a Day-Long Organ Concert Event December 10, 2022

(October 27, 2022) The Music at Trinity Concert Series, under the direction of Trinity Cathedral's Canon Musician Erik W. Goldstrom, will celebrate the 200th birthday of composer César Franck on December 10 (the date of Franck's birth) by performing his complete works for organ.

Franck's twelve works for *Grand-Orgue* will be heard in a series of three free concerts, scheduled for 2:00, 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. and will be played by three organists from the Phoenix area: Erik W. Goldstrom, James Gerber, Kimberly Marshall. Each concert will last about an hour. A reception will be held in the Cathedral's Olney Gallery between the 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. concerts, and there will be a 2-hour dinner break before the final concert at 7 p.m. Feel free to come for just one or two concerts, or plan to make a day of it. It is possible that this will be the only complete performance of Franck's works in Arizona.

Erik W. Goldstrom on the Importance of Franck's Organ Music

According to Goldstrom: "It would be hard to overestimate César Franck's importance to the world of organ music. Born in Liège in 1822, the family moved to Paris in order to further César's budding musical career. Enrolled in the prestigious Paris *Conservatoire*, Franck soon distinguished himself with academic prizes in piano, counterpoint, and organ. By 1858 he was installed as the organist and *maître de chapelle* at the newly consecrated church of Ste. Clotilde with a new, three-manual Cavaillé-Coll installed in the rear gallery.

Franck's twelve published compositions for *Grand-Orgue* represent a conscious effort to move away from the organ tradition then current in France – an admixture of showy improvisations and transcriptions from operas and symphonies. Franck's music was always categorized as "serious" in press reviews from his time and indeed it is. Heavily influenced by the works of Beethoven, Franck's compositions for organ stand out precisely because they are so structured and thoughtfully worked-out.

Franck's works represent a new style in the development of French romantic music for the organ. In addition to their compositional complexity, these works were meant to showcase the tonal advancements being made by Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, arguably the most influential organ builder of his day. With a strong preference for foundational 8' tone, harmonic stops, and orchestral reeds, Cavaillé-Coll's soundscape is quite different from what had been common in previous centuries of French organ building. Franck's

organ works provided the compositional framework for what would become the dominant French Romantic sound.”

For further information on the Franck celebration and for biographies of the musicians, please visit trinitymusicaz.org.