

## Pipe organ key to symphony concert

### World-renowned musician to take center stage

The music of First United Methodist Church's grand pipe organ will fill the 87-foot-tall sanctuary Friday evening for the Murfreesboro Symphony Orchestra concert.



World-renown organist Andrew Risinger will perform classic and popular pieces on the Milnar Organ at 7:30 p.m. Friday at the church.

Andrew Risinger is an adjunct instructor at the Belmont University School of Music where he teaches applied organ classes.

Risinger was awarded second prize in the American Guild of Organists' National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance in 1994, and he is a past winner of the William C. Hall Organ Competition in San Antonio.

As a recitalist, he has performed in Texas, California, the Midwest and throughout the Eastern United States. In the summer of 1996, he performed at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City as a part of the opening convocation of the American Guild of Organists' Centennial Convention. Two years later, Risinger traveled to England for his first overseas solo recital with a performance in Great Torrington, Devonshire. He has also appeared as organ soloist with the Nashville Symphony Orchestra and the Illinois Symphony Orchestra.

Selections from the concert will include Bach's "Tocatta & Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565," John Weaver's "Rhapsody for Flute & Organ" and Pietro Mascagni's "Intermezzo" from "Cavalleria Rusticana," among many others.

The Murfreesboro Symphony Orchestra will perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday. Featured during the concert will be the First United Methodist Church's grand pipe organ, its pipes rising above the symphony, played by renowned organist Andrew Risinger.

## **SOLOIST**

### **Elliott Peterson - Tenor**

Elliott Peterson is the Director of Music at First United Methodist Church in Murfreesboro, TN. Mr. Peterson holds a Bachelor of Music from Middle Tennessee State University where he studied voice with Dr. Lawrence Hensel and conducting with Dr. Raphael Blindage Mr. Peterson also holding a Master of Arts in Music from Middle Tennessee State University with an emphasis in Choral Conducting, where he studied choral conducting with Dr. Raphael Bundage and voice with John Kramer. Mr. Peterson is an active tenor soloist in the Middle Tennessee area and has appeared in many productions and concerts at Middle Tennessee State University and area churches.

# PROGRAM

## Grand Choeur Dialogue

*Eugene Gigout*

Alan Suska, Trumpet  
Charles Decker, Trumpet  
Robyn Ryan, French Horn  
Brent Gerlach, Trombone  
Marcus Arnold, Tuba

## Tocatta & Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565

*J. S. Bach*

## Rhapsody for Flute & Organ

*John Weaver*

Carol Fisher Dunne, Flute

## If With All Your Hearts from Elijah

*Felix Mendelssohn*

Elliott Peterson, Tenor

## Adagio in E Major

*Frank Bridge*

## Capriccio for Organ & Violin

*Naji Hakim*

Stefan Petrescu, Violin

## INTERMISSION

## Lotus (arranged by Alec Wyton)

*Billy Strayhorn*

## Final from Symphony I

*Louis Vierne*

## Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana

*Pietro Mascagni*

Stefan Petrescu, Violin

## Scherzo from Symphony IV

*C. M. Widor*

## Londonderry Air

*arranger, Mark D. Lew*

Elliott Peterson, Tenor

## Final from Symphonie in D Minor

*Alexandre Guilmant*

Alan Suska, Trumpet  
Charles Decker, Trumpet  
Robyn Ryan, French Horn  
Brent Gerlach, Trombone  
Marcus Arnold, Tuba  
Jeff Mulvihill, Timpani

## **Review given by Ms. Ellen Buckner for Daily News Journal**

If you have ever been inside the First United Methodist Church and noticed the organ pipes above the choir loft, and wondered what it would sound like to have them played full throttle, you found out at the recent Murfreesboro Symphony Orchestra organ concert. Guest artist Andrew Risinger used every stop, including the copper trumpets, to show what a magnificent instrument can do. It was thrilling.

The first selection featured a Brass Quintet from the MSO with organ playing Gigout's "Grand Choeur Dialogue". It was militaristic in the sharp rhythms and very dramatic in the dynamics. The audience knew it was going to be a wonderful evening.

Risinger introduced each piece with a little history and telling just what the organ would be producing.

The second selection was Bach's "Tocatta & Fugue in D minor". It is a favorite, and several audience members clapped as it began. One could close eyes and be transformed to the cathedral in Leipzig, imagining Bach himself playing. The organ sounded exactly as it would have in the 1600's.

The third selection featured the MSO principal flautist, Carol Fisher Dunne, playing John Weaver's "Rhapsody for Flute and Organ". It was a very modern piece, bringing to mind the German composer Hindemuth's avant garde style of writing. At times, the organ stop matched the sound of the flute so perfectly that you couldn't tell the difference. Dunne's technique is impeccable; the arpeggios fluid and the modern leaps perfectly on pitch.

The next piece was from Mendelssohn's favorite oratorio "Elijah". Elliot Peterson sang the tenor aria "If With All Your Hearts" with such beauty. His diction was excellent, even without the mike, and the tempo gave the audience time to reflect on the text.

The "Adagio in E Major" by Frank Bridge showed off the full range of the organ's capabilities with very romantic melodies and the volume from very soft to thundering fortissimo.

The last piece before intermission was "Capriccio for Organ & Violin" by Naji Hakim. It featured MSO Concertmaster Stefan Petrescu in an unusual piece. It was Middle Eastern, jazz, Latin syncopated rhythms in the organ, against Petrescu's luscious legato melodies on the violin. The audience loved it.

After the intermission, Risinger played a beautiful arrangement by Alex Wyton of Billy Strayhorn's "Lotus". Strayhorn was a friend of Duke Ellington and this was definitely a jazz piece. It was played at Ellington's funeral and has a beautiful, haunting sense throughout. One could imagine it being played as background for a Hollywood film.

The next piece was one organists waited for! Louis Vierne's "Finale" from Symphony 1 features all three keyboards plus the pedals. It was a marvel to see Risinger's fingers flying all over the three keyboards, and his feet flying over the pedals at the same time...like rubbing your tummy and patting your head at the same time, only at lightning speed. Bravos from the audience.

One of the most beautiful and beloved melodies from opera is the "Intermezzo" from Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana". Stefan Petrescu played it exquisitely, bringing out every nuance and pathos that is in the melody.

C.M.Vidor's "Scherzo" from Symphony IV was very playful and joyous. Scherzo in Italian means joke, and this certainly was full of frivolity and fun. Vidor's "Toccatto & Fugue" is a favorite of organists and audiences.

Arranger Mark D. Lew made the old English Londonderry Air into a beautiful piece better known as "Danny Boy". Elliot Peterson sang it with such sadness and poignancy, that the audience held its applause, not wanting to spoil the moment.

The "Finale" from Alexandre Guilmant's Symphonie in D Minor brought out all of the stops, and with the Brass Quintet. The rhythms, volume, copper trumpets and dynamics thrilled the audience and shook the sanctuary. The Brass Quintet sounded like a full orchestra with the organ. It was so dramatic that one might have thought the Gates of Heaven were about to open.

The audience was on its feet instantly with many Bravos and whistles and non-stop applause. As people were leaving they were shaking their heads and saying "Wow what a concert!" And it truly was.

Risinger is a rising star in the field of organists. His manner is casual (coming out after Intermission without his coat) and warm. Explaining each piece and how he would use the organ was not only educational but informative for the audience, and we knew what to listen for from the instrument. His selections were varied from Bach to Ellington, and French to Lebanon, making for a thoroughly wonderful evening.

Ellen Buckner is a former opera singer, retired college music professor and private voice instructor.