

*Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*

For Organ Solo

by

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## Abstract

Inspired by Gregorian chant, the Modes of Limited Transposition, and techniques of 20<sup>th</sup>-century music, with an advanced organist in mind, *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, for organ solo, is based on the 11<sup>th</sup>-century plainsong *Victimae Paschali Laudes*. This approximately fifteen-minute-long work honours the long heritage of organ music, while juxtaposing traditional and contemporary elements in form, harmony, rhythm, and texture within a single work. Consisting of a Theme and nine variations bookended by outer movements, this form is one of my own devising. The work features synthetic scales, polychords, Neo-Riemannian permutations, modal simultaneities, and irregular metrical structures, with inspiration from Leclerc, Messiaen, Stravinsky, Langlais, and Escaich. This combination of influences and technical considerations creates a composition which is unique within my catalogue while honouring and building upon the tradition of chant-based organ works.

## Résumé

Inspiré par le chant grégorien, les modes de transposition limitée et les techniques de la musique du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, avec une organiste avancé à l'esprit, la composition *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* pour orgue solo, est basée sur le chant grégorien du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle *Victimae Paschali Laudes*. Cette œuvre d'environ quinze minutes honore le long héritage de la musique d'orgue, tout en juxtaposant des éléments traditionnels et contemporains dans la forme, l'harmonie, rythme, et la texture au sein d'une même œuvre. Constituée d'un thème et de neuf variations fermées par des mouvements extérieurs, cette forme est l'une de mes propres créations. L'œuvre présente des gammes synthétiques, des poly-accords, des permutations néo-riemanniennes, des simultanéités modales et des structures métriques irrégulières, inspirés de Leclerc, Messiaen, Stravinsky, Langlais et Escaich. Cette combinaison d'influences et de considérations techniques crée une composition unique dans mon catalogue tout en honorant et en s'appuyant sur la tradition des œuvres pour orgue basées sur le chant grégorien.

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## I. 1: Historical and Compositional Contexts

### 1. 1. Prologue

The repertoire for the pipe organ remains the largest of any Western instrument, stretching back over six hundred years. *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* is a work based on the 11<sup>th</sup>-century plainsong *Victimae Paschali Laudes* which honours the lineage of organ music, while juxtaposing traditional and contemporary elements within a single work. This section introduces the background of this composition.

Music for the pipe organ, with its venerable history, has long been connected to liturgy. The earliest collections of keyboard music, such as the late 14<sup>th</sup> century Robertsbridge Codex<sup>1</sup> and early 15<sup>th</sup> century Faenza Codex,<sup>2</sup> contain arrangements of sacred vocal works. The latter codex contains works based on plainchant belonging to the Ordinary of the Mass, such as the *Kyrie* from the *Missa IV: Cunctipotens Genitor Deus*.<sup>3</sup> Such works appear to be intended for *alternatim* singing of the traditional nine-part *Kyrie*, making the examples from the Faenza Codex the first notated liturgical music for the organ.<sup>4</sup> Organ and liturgy continue to be connected into the present day, with many works composed for the instrument based on liturgical music. Many of the most famous composers of Western art music were also organists, such as Tallis, Sweelinck, Buxtehude, Bach, Handel, Mozart, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Liszt, Brahms, Bruckner, Dvořák, Hindemith, and Messiaen, many of whom are not known primarily for their contributions to the organ repertoire.

In spite of recent shifts in the broader society away from the practice of Christianity, the pipe organ retains strong association to liturgy and church music in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As an organist and a church musician, I have a deep connection to both the organ and Gregorian chant repertoires. Given my experience in church music, I choose to compose a work which combines my love for organ and plainsong, although in a more contemporary musical context. Composing a set of variations for organ is a natural choice, for the variation genre stems in large part from organists improvising sets of extemporizations, originally upon chant melodies, which would be played *in alternatim* with the choir.

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<sup>1</sup> “GB-LBL Add. MS 28550,” Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://www.diamm.ac.uk/sources/386/#/>.

<sup>2</sup> “FZC MS 117 (Faenza),” Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music, accessed November 3, 2021, <https://www.diamm.ac.uk/sources/131/#/>.

<sup>3</sup> As organized in the *Liber Usualis* of Solesmes.

<sup>4</sup> Richard, Robinson, “The Faenza Codex: The Case for Solo Organ Revisited,” *The Journal of Musicology* 34, no. 4 (2017): 611-612. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26414233>.

These short improvisations were called *versets* by the French in the Baroque era, although the aforementioned example from the Faenza Codex shows that this practice existed from at least the late Medieval period. While my *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* is specifically intended as a concert work, it seeks to honour this history. The form of the composition is one of my own devising, with a prelude-type movement, a theme and nine variations, and an energetic postlude-type movement to conclude. The bookend movements are composed with the intention of avoiding the stiff sectionality which so often pervades the theme-and-variation genre. This form also allows me to include a greater employment of free material than is typical of the theme and variations genre. Within the work, I introduce some 20<sup>th</sup>-century elements, such as hexachords and polychords, synthetic scales, false relations, non-tertian writing, Neo-Riemannian and modal progressions, as well as irregular metres. Inspiration taken from Leclerc, Messiaen, Stravinsky, Langlais, and Escaich, among others, all influence my harmonic language. Registration, texture, and register form the final area of interest, although much of this subject consists of a personal exploration as opposed to a referencing of past examples.

## 1. 2. Document Structure

There are three major sections within this text: I: Historical and Compositional Contexts, II: Analysis, and III: Epilogue. Within Section I, excluding the Prologue, there are three subsections: 2: Background and Treatment of the Melodic Source Material, 3: Relevant Organ Repertoire: Formal, Stylistic, and Technical Considerations, and 4: Contextualization within the Composer's Catalogue. Subsection 2 outlines the historical context of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* plainsong, the musical characteristics of the melody, the Solesmes Method, and the use of a truncation of the source material. Within Subsection 3, I feature five organ works which influence my composing of the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, detailing attributes of these works which I expound upon in my own composition. In Subsection 4, I examine four of my own works which inform how I compose this large-scale organ work.

Section II deals with analysis, organized by topic instead of chronologically, allowing the discussion of individual techniques employed in their respective passages even when not used consecutively. Despite this topical organization, the subjects flow from one to the next in order of priority, with the first considerations leading to the last considerations. It is therefore divided into six subsections: 1: Form, 2: Rhythmic Structure, 3: Harmony, 4: Interactions Between Harmony and Counterpoint, 5: Counterpoint, and 6: Texture, Register, and Registration.

Section III is the Epilogue, wherein a conclusion reflects on how my work fits into the broader organ repertoire, the overall creation of the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, how I have changed as a composer through this process, and anticipations of the future of my composing, as well as. Two bibliographies, one for text and one for scores, form the final section.

## I. 2: Background and Treatment of the Melodic Source Material

### 2. 1: The History of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* Chant

#### 2. 1. 1: The Sequence Genre of Plainchant

The plainchant *Victimae Paschali Laudes* is a Medieval melody, sung as the Sequence on Easter Sunday in the Roman Catholic Church. It is traditionally attributed to Wipo of Burgundy, a priest and writer, who died in 1048.<sup>5</sup> The chant genre of the Sequence flourished in the pre-Tridentine liturgy, with thousands composed, but with the publication of the 1570 Missal, only four remained. The other three Sequences include: *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, for Pentecost, *Lauda Sion* for Corpus Christi, and *Dies Irae*, in the Requiem Mass, with the *Stabat Mater*, for the Feast of the Sevens Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary later restored. The 1570 Missal also deleted the original eighth stanza from the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* chant, which included a pejorative reference to the Jews. The entire chant is as follows.

The image displays the musical notation for the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* chant using Solesmes notation. The notation consists of square neumes on a four-line red staff. The text is written in Latin below the staff. The notation includes a 'Seq. 1.' label and a large 'V' for the initial 'Victimae'. The text is as follows:

Seq. 1.  
**V**ictimae paschá-li láudes • ímmolent Christi-áni.  
 Agnus redémit óves : Christus ínnocens Pátri reconci-  
 li-ávit peccatóres. Mors et ví-ta du-élo confluxére mirán-  
 do : dux vítae mórtu-us, régnat vívus. Dic nóbis Marí- a,  
 quid vidísti in ví-a? Sepúlcrum Christi vivéntis, et gló-  
 ri-am vídi resurgéntis : Ángé-licos téstes, sudá-ri-um, et  
 véstes. Surréxit Christus spes mé- a : praecedet sú-os in Ga-  
 lilaé-am. Scímus Christum surrexísse a mórtu- is vere :  
 tu nóbis, víctor Rex, mi-se-ré-re. Amen. Alle-lú-ia.

Figure 1. The Solesmes notation of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* chant.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Victimae Paschali Laudes," *Virgo Sacrata*, April 3, 2021, accessed September 9, 2021, <https://www.virgosacrata.com/victimae-paschali-laudes.html>.

<sup>6</sup> *Victimae Paschali Laudes*. In *The Liber Usualis: With Introduction and Rubrics in English*, 780. Tournai, Belgium: Desclee, 1961.



## 2. 2: Musical Characteristics of *Victimae Paschali Laudes*

The original chant melody is cast in Mode 1, often referred to as the authentic “Dorian mode,” although the Greek names for the ecclesiastical modes remain problematic, due to a misapplication of Grecian terminology to the numbered Church modes, most likely by the French abbot and theorist Hucbald (c. 840—930).<sup>7</sup> Taking this into consideration, Mode 1 spells D – E – F – G – A – B – C back to D. D is the final of this scale, while A is the reciting tone (also called the ‘dominant’ by some modal theorists, even though this is not the fifth scale degree in Modes 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8). The sixth degree, B $\natural$ , can be lowered, but to the Medieval theorists, this did not change the character of the mode. Neither B $\natural$  nor B $\flat$  appear in the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* chant, which creates a quasi- pentatonic sound, although this melody does include the second scale degree.

## 2. 3: The Solesmes Method and Rhythm

There are varying approaches to the interpretation of Gregorian chant, particularly regarding rhythm, with the Solesmes Method, and the Semiology of Dom Eugène Cardine (1905–1988) forming two of the most prominent branches of interpretation. While I have limited familiarity with the Semiological Method, I have always sung the chants from an original Solesmes *Liber Usualis* from 1961. Beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the monks of St. Peter's Abbey in Solesmes, France sought to restore the tradition of Gregorian chant. Through research and the comparison of manuscripts, the monks created a standardized four-line system of musical notation, as well as interpretive symbols to communicate the performance practice of the chant regarding rhythm and phrasing as they understood it. The Solesmes Method remains somewhat controversial, especially in academic circles, due to this invention of signs for interpretation which do not exist in the original manuscripts, with the musicological evidence in opposition to the performance practice developed at Solesmes. Regardless, in 1904, Pope Pius X commissioned the creation of the *Liber Usualis*, which he made the authoritative edition of Gregorian for the Catholic Church. Due to the longstanding support for the Solesmes Method at an ecclesiastical level, it overwhelmingly forms the dominant performance practice for the singing of plainsong at Mass.

Since the performance practice of the Solesmes Method is most familiar to me, as well as most familiar to Catholics both in the pews and in a given schola, I choose to set the *Victimae Paschali Laudes*

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<sup>7</sup> “Church Mode,” Encyclopedia Britannica, Feb 15, 2016, accessed September 10, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/art/church-mode>.

melody in the typical free-time style in the Theme. Each punctum within the chant becomes a quarter note, while the dotted puncta become dotted half notes, although, strictly speaking, dotted puncta in the middle of a phrase are normally doubled in the performance practice, and not tripled, as is the case in the middle of the last musical phrase of the Theme. Compare the Solesmes notation of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* and how results in the Theme as seen in Figure 2A-B.

The figure is divided into two parts. The top part shows the Solesmes notation of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* chant. It begins with a 'Seq.' (Sequence) and a large 'V' for 'Victimae'. The notation is a single melodic line with square neumes on a four-line staff. The lyrics are in Latin, with some words in French: 'Ictimae paschá-li láudes • ímmolent Christi-áni. Agnus redémit óves : Christus ínnocens Pátri reconci- li- ávit peccatóres. Mors et ví-ta du-élo confixére mirán- do : dux vítae mórtu-us, régnat vívus. Dic nóbis Marí- a, quid vidísti in ví- a? Sepúlcrum Chrísti vivéntis, et gló- ri- am vídi resurgéntis : Ángé-licos téstes, sudá-ri-um, et véstes. Surréxit Chrístus spes mé- a : praecedet sú-os in Ga- lilaé- am. Scímus Chrístum surrexísse a mórtu- is vere : tu nóbis, víctor Rex, mí-se-ré-re. Amen. Alle-lú-ia.'

The bottom part shows a piano arrangement of the same chant, titled 'Theme'. It is marked '40 Adagio (♩ = 60)' and 'II. Flute 8'. The arrangement is in a piano style, with the melody in the right hand and a harmonic accompaniment in the left hand. The notation is in a modern staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 4/4. The piece ends with a 'rit.' (ritardando) marking.

Figure 2A-B. The Solesmes notation of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* chant<sup>8</sup> (top), and its arrangement in the Theme area (bottom).

<sup>8</sup> *Victimae Paschali Laudes*. In *The Liber Usualis: With Introduction and Rubrics in English*, 780. Tournai, Belgium: Desclee, 1961.

Since I rely on the Solesmes rhythmic performance practice, many variations, such as Variations I and III keep the chant theme in quarter notes, although including some passing tones, with the metres changing around the cantus firmus, as opposed to rhythmically altering the chant to fit a regular metre, such as in Variation IX.

## **2. 4: Truncated Use of the Source Melody**

This chant is comprised of several repeated melodic phrases, particularly in the latter part of the Sequence. Czech composer Jiří Ropek (1922–2005), in his *Variations on “Victimae Paschali Laudes,”* truncates the melody, uses the phrases which are sung to, “*Victimae paschali laudes immolent Christiani. Agnus redemit oves: Christus innocens Patri reconciliavit peccatores.*” I take the same approach, using only the first two full phrases, grammatically speaking, to avoid excessive repetition.

The historical origins of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* chant, along with its musical characteristics, and the performance practice of Solesmes, give context and history as it pertains to this chant. Detailed musical inspiration for my *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* from the organ repertoire is outlined in I. 3.

### I. 3: Relevant Organ Repertoire: Formal, Stylistic, and Technical Considerations

#### 3. 1: Gilles Leclerc - *Tryptique sur le choral “Nun Komm’, Der Heiden Heiland”*

The *Tryptique sur le choral “Nun Komm’, Der Heiden Heiland”* (1983, rev. 2000) by Canadian organist-composer Gilles Maurice Leclerc (b. 1960) holds much influence on the material of my Introduction, and this work perhaps holds the most direct influence on my composition out of those included in this subsection. As a former organ student of Leclerc, he has shared many of compositions with me over the years, which has left a lasting impact.

The *Final* movement of the aforementioned work begins with a dissonant sonority, seen in Figure 3, comprised of C – E – G $\flat$  – G $\sharp$ . This sonority functions as a harmonic motif throughout the work, appearing seven times in various contexts, creating a sense of cohesion in a fairly dissonant soundscape. I use a dissonant hexachord, further explained in II. 3. 1, as a harmonic motif, drawing inspiration from Leclerc’s similar treatment of a motivic sonority. After one measure, the pedals enter with an ascending chromatic line of Leclerc’s sonority on the manuals, although the pitch content in the pedals is largely unrelated to the chord in the manuals, again seen in Figure 3.



Figure 3. The opening measures of Leclerc’s *Final* from his *Tryptique sur le choral “Nun Komm’, Der Heiden Heiland”*.<sup>9</sup>

The sonority in the manuals suddenly disappears at m. 4, at which point a single chromatic line the left hand ascends on beats one and two, before the right hand enters with the same pattern an octave higher on beats three and four. I incorporate a similar unfolding at the beginning of my Introduction, inspired by the shape of these opening gestures, as seen in Figure 4. This inspiration serves as the catalyst for my entire compositional process. Leclerc and his music hold a large influence on my style, and this inspiration and gestural similarity is intended as a homage to my friend and former teacher.

<sup>9</sup> Gilles Leclerc, *Tryptique sur le choral “Nun Komm’, Der Heiden Heiland”*, Ottawa: GML Music, 1983, rev. 2000.

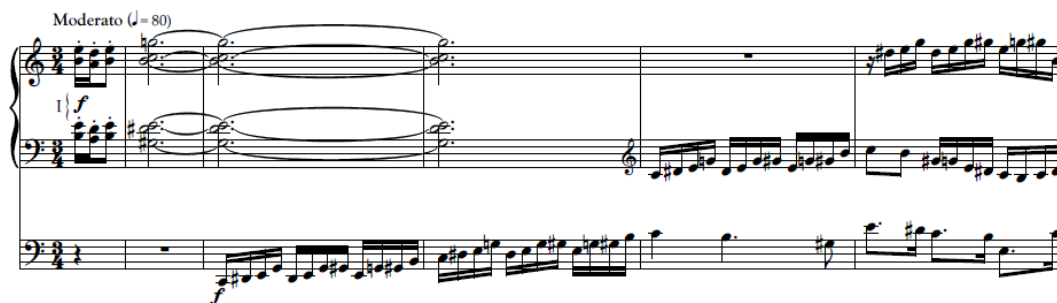


Figure 4. The opening of my Introduction, which pays homage to the music of Leclerc.

### 3. 2: Jiří Ropek - *Variations on “Victimae Paschali Laudes”*

The aforementioned *Variations on “Victimae Paschali Laudes”*, composed in 1963 by Czech composer Jiří Ropek (1922–2005), is the next work to influence my composition. To my knowledge, this twelve-minute-long work is only other large-scale set of variations for organ based on the Easter Sequence. Eight variations follow the theme, each showcasing different techniques. Formally, Ropek’s set of variations differs from my own, for the they all remain in the same tonal centre and no interludes link them. My composition is instead devised in three large-scale sections: an Introduction, the Theme and nine subsequent variations, and a Finale, with an approximate duration of fifteen minutes.

The style of Ropek’s work is somewhat similar to my own, in terms of the harmonies employed. He often uses chordal extensions by thirds, with many techniques for colouring the harmonies, as seen in his Theme, and some passages even include false relations, which I employ for the first time in this composition, as described in II. 2. 8. Some specific influence arises from Ropek’s Variation V, which serves as inspiration for my Variation VI, for this is the most chromatic of my variations and also set in a slow tempo, with our slowest variations contrasted in Figure 5A-B.



Figure 5A-B. Ropek’s highly chromatic and slow Variation V<sup>10</sup> (left), and my similarly conceived Variation VI (right).

<sup>10</sup> Jiří Ropek, *Variations on “Victimae Paschali Laudes” for Organ*, London: Oxford University Press, 1963.

Ropek's use of canons also influences my work with respect to texture, figuration, and canonic treatment. Both of our second variations feature canons, a running left-hand figuration, and the canonic voices in the right hand and pedal. Analysis of my canonic treatment in Variation II appears in further detail in II. 5. 1.

### 3. 3: Charles Tournemire (trans. Duruflé) – *Choral-Improvisation sur le “Victimae Paschali”*

Charles Tournemire's famous *Choral-Improvisation sur le “Victimae Paschali”*, perhaps the most famous of these five works, is another composition which influences my process. Tournemire (1870–1939) was a prominent organist, pedagogue, and composer in Paris, as well as the titular organist at Sainte-Clotilde. This is one of the improvisations Tournemire recorded in 1930 and 1931, transcribed by Maurice Duruflé (1902–1986). Gregorian chant themes form the basis for all five improvisations, and the fifth uses the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* as its inspiration.

The improvisation begins with a triplet gesture, outlining the first few notes of the chant, as seen in Figure 6A, a recurring gesture within Tournemire's improvisation. I begin my work with a similar motivic gesture, as seen in Figure 6B, although mine is rhythmically altered, and I do not quote the chant theme beyond the fourth note within the Introduction. These gestures are almost identical, although I use perfect-fourths in both hands to thicken the opening motion. Tournemire's repeated use of this gesture and its permutations differs from my use thereof, wherein I use it sparingly, to begin both the Introduction and the Finale, and to lead into the final chord.



Figure 6A-B. The opening gesture of Tournemire's improvisation (left) and the opening gesture of my work (right).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Charles Tournemire, and Maurice Duruflé (transcriber), *Choral-Improvisation sur le "Victimae Paschali" in Cinq improvisations pour orgue*, 48, Paris: Durand, 1998.

### 3. 4: Maurice Duruflé - *Prélude, adagio et choral varié sur le theme du 'Veni Creator,'* op. 4

Composed in 1930, Maurice Duruflé's *Prélude, adagio et choral varié sur le theme du 'Veni Creator'* op. 4, serves as a model for my ninth and final variation. As seen in Figure 7A, Duruflé's the third variation of the third movement creates a lush harmonic soundscape with string stops, and places the *Veni Creator* chant, the basis of his variations, in the pedals, but with a solo stop at four-foot pitch, sounding an octave higher than written. This stop stands out against the string stops, both in terms of its timbre, as either a foundation or flute against the strings, but also due to its register. My ninth variation features a similar texture, as seen in Figure 7B.

The image contains two musical score excerpts. The left excerpt, labeled 'Andante espressivo. ♩ = 66', shows a piano arrangement with a treble staff for the right hand (R. H.), a bass staff for the left hand (L. H.), and a separate line for the pedals (Péd.). The right hand plays a melodic line with string stops (Staccato), and the left hand plays a harmonic accompaniment. The pedals play a solo line. The right excerpt, labeled 'Largo (♩ = 50) Variation IX', shows a piano arrangement with a treble staff for the right hand (R. H.), a bass staff for the left hand (L. H.), and a separate line for the pedals (Péd.). The right hand plays a melodic line with string stops (Staccato), and the left hand plays a harmonic accompaniment. The pedals play a solo line. The right excerpt also includes a 'Solo Flute 4'' part in the bass staff, marked 'meno f'.

Figure 7A-B. Duruflé's third variation (left) and my Variation IX (right).<sup>12</sup>

### 3. 5: Thierry Escaich - *Vers L'Esperance* from *Poèmes vol. 1*

The final influential work from the organ repertoire is *Vers L'Esperance* from *Poèmes vol. 1* by French organist-composer Thierry Escaich (b. 1965). Since 1996, Escaich has been the co-titular organist at Saint-Étienne-du-Mont in Paris, where Maurice Duruflé was organist for 57 years. Escaich's music typically features a many dissonant sonorities, driving rhythms, and frequently changing metres. Although Escaich has a work titled, *Cinq Versets sur le "Victimae paschali,"* it is a movement from his *Poèmes vol. 1*, which I draw inspiration from. Composed in 2002, each movement depicts a different section of Alain Suied's poem, *Le Pays Perdu*, with *Vers L'Esperance* as the third and final movement in this set.

*Vers L'Esperance* is the catalyst for the Finale. It employs a fast, unrelenting tempo, marked *Vivacissimo*, with the tempo as ♩ = 126. More importantly, the work features constantly changing time signatures, with groupings of ♩ and ♩ frequently juxtaposed. The metres shift so regularly, that

<sup>12</sup> Maurice Duruflé, *Choral varié* from *Prélude, Adagio, et Choral varié, sur le theme du Veni creator, opus 4*, in *Œuvres pour orgue: Édition originale*, 43, Paris: Éditions Durand – Salabert – Eschig, 2015.

Escaich opts to engrave the entire composition without any time signatures written in the score. Other elements I find inspiration in include the use of false-relations and chords which repeat rhythmically without changing their pitch content. The metrical shapeshifting also reminds me of one of my own compositions, the *Toccata – Exultemus Domino*, completed in May 2021, which is addressed in I. 4. 4.

Figure 8A-B shows the opening of *Vers L'Esperance*, alongside the opening of my Finale. The use of false relations as well as rhythmically repeated chords, which are essentially hammered on the manuals, are two elements which I have never used in one of my compositions until the composing of the Finale.

The figure contains two musical staves. The top staff is for Escaich's *Vers L'Esperance*, featuring a treble and bass clef with a 2/4 time signature. It includes markings for 'GPR', 'f marcato', and 'mp'. The bottom staff is for the author's Finale, starting at measure 184 with a 'Presto' tempo and a quarter note equal to 160. It includes markings for 'ff', 'non troppo legato', and 'Ped. I. / Ped.'. The notation shows complex rhythmic patterns and false relations in both pieces.

Figure 8A-B. The opening of Escaich's *Vers L'Esperance*<sup>13</sup> (top) and the opening of my Finale (bottom).

Also inspired by Escaich's *Vers L'Esperance* is the voice-leading pattern in the Finale, discussed in detail in II. 4. 2. Escaich employs an outwardly expanding set of clusters, seen in Figure 9A. This passage is more dissonant than what I feel comfortable with within my own style, but I nonetheless found it intriguing, leading to the pattern seen in Figure 9B.

<sup>13</sup> Thierry Escaich, *Vers L'Esperance*. in *Poèmes vol. 1*, 24, Paris: Éditions Billaudot, 2002.





Figure 9A-B. Escaich's outwardly expanding clusters<sup>14</sup> (top), and horizontally realized chords (bottom).

These five works are a combined influence on many of the techniques found in my *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, in addition to previously composed works from my own catalogue, as described in I. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Thierry Escaich, *Vers L'Esperance*. in *Poèmes* vol. 1, 32, Paris: Éditions Billaudot, 2002.

## I. 4: Contextualization within the Composer's Repertoire

### 4. 1: *Cò am Fear*

I offer four examples of my own work to contextualize the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*. The first, *Cò am Fear*, was composed in the fall of 2018, and is a large set of nine variations for string orchestra. This work is based on a Scottish Gaelic folksong, titled, “*An Eala Bhàn*,” which translates to “the White Swan,” and the work lasts for approximately nine and a half minutes. *Cò am Fear* is the only set of variations I have composed previous to the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, and the former serves as a model for the latter in the areas of form and tonal scheme.

One formal consideration I pondered in both works is the use of interludes between variations. In *Cò am Fear* the interludes tend to last for ten to twenty seconds on average, with only one pair of variations connected by a pivot chord and not an interlude. Meanwhile, in the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, they tend to be roughly ten seconds long, with the transition from Variation IX to the Finale forming the longest interlude at fifteen seconds long. Not every pair of variations is connected by an interlude. Sometimes it is simply a few notes in the pedals which connect one variation to the next.

The use of different tonal centres in each variation constitutes another formal consideration. In *Cò am Fear*, only three of the eight variations are in the tonic key. In the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, three of the nine variations remain in the overall tonal centre of C minor, which is also the tonal centre of the theme area, with the six remaining variations venturing to various other tonal centres without reuse, with the exception of Variations II and IX, which both occur in E minor.

### 4. 2: *Jubilate Deo*

*Jubilate Deo*, an organ composition from October 2020, bares little obvious similarity to the musical substance of the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, but it is because of a single sonority in the former that the latter began. Within *Jubilate Deo*, there is a triad with tertiary chordal extensions which forms a kind of harmonic motif. This B-Minor triad, with the added seventh, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth, seen in Figure 10, is voiced in fifths and semitones, but most importantly, it features a mirrored voicing.



Figure 10. The minor-thirteenth chord which features prominently in *Jubilate Deo*.

Within this collection of all seven pitches of the A-Major scale, the sonority shown in Figure 10 contains two different groupings of stacked perfect fifths: the first, B – F# – C# – G#, and the second, D – A – E. When these two collections of stacked fifths are superimposed, they create a B-Minor-Thirteenth chord with the intervallic content of four perfect fifths, an augmented fourth, and two semitones. The mirrored voicings between the right hand's semitone and perfect fifth and left hands' perfect fifth and semitone give this chord a spacious, ethereal quality, and is a kind of sonority is one which I deeply enjoy. I began to explore similar mirrored sonorities, and I experimented by moving the shape in one hand up or down a semitone while keeping the other hand stationary. In doing so, I moved the right hand's shape up a semitone to become A – Bb – F#. This then led to the Bb in the bass sounding extremely discordant, so I moved it down a semitone to B, suddenly creating a sonority I had never heard before, seen in Figure 11, although transposed. When composing the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, I choose to transpose this sonority up a whole tone, to make C the root, and the overall pitch centre of the work, which allows for the use of the lowest C pedal on the organ, as well as avoiding extraneous chromatic spellings and enharmonic confusion. This sonority belongs to Messiaen's Third Mode of Limited Transposition, as is detailed in II. 3. 1.

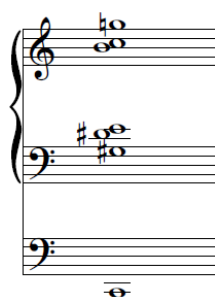


Figure 11. The mirrored voicings of the Messiaen Mode 3 hexachord derived through experimentation with the minor-thirteenth chord from *Jubilate Deo*.

I discovered this sonority at shortly before I first encountered Leclerc's *Final* from his *Tryptique sur le choral "Nun Komm", Der Heiden Heiland*", which features a dissonant sonority as a harmonic motif. Had I not experimented with the minor-thirteenth chord from *Jubilate Deo*, the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* would be an entirely different work.

#### 4. 3: *Toccata Luminosa*

*Toccata Luminosa*, an organ composition from August 2021, also informs the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*. This work features extensive passages, both in the manuals and pedals, of three sets of sixteenth-note triplets in  $\frac{6}{8}$  time. This pattern give rise to the fifth variation, although placing this flourish in a different context, in  $\frac{9}{8}$  as seen in Figures 12A-B. By juxtaposing a loud, fast flourishing gesture on one manual against a soft, slower passage on another, Variation V creates an antiphonal quality previously unseen in my catalogue.

Figure 12A-B. The gesture in the *Toccata Luminosa* (left), and the similar gesture recontextualized in Variation V (right).

#### 4. 4: *Toccata – Exultemus Domino*

A work composed in May 2021, *Toccata – Exultemus Domino* is the first composition in which I employ both frequently changing metres and irregular metres. Although I began working on it in late 2018, the use of rapidly changing metres was beyond my abilities at that time. It was not completed until May 2021, when I shared the unfinished score with organist Matthew Larkin, who offered to premiere it upon completion, motivating me to finish it. This toccata consists primarily of  $\frac{8}{16}$  time, with the beats typically grouped as  $\frac{4}{16} + \frac{4}{16} + \frac{4}{16}$ , although there are occasional deviations from this pattern. Other metres include  $\frac{4}{16}$ ,  $\frac{6}{16}$ ,  $\frac{7}{16}$ ,  $\frac{10}{16}$ , and  $\frac{13}{16}$ , excluding the middle section's choral in  $\frac{2}{4}$ . The metres are rarely used for more than a few consecutive measures, which creates an energetic and frenzied atmosphere. The beginning is excerpted in Figure 13A.

Having composed this piece earlier this year, and only having used such metrical techniques once thus far, I was interested in employing it again. Escaich's *Vers L'Esperance* gave me the necessary inspiration to use such techniques again, as seen in the Finale, shown in Figure 13B. Whereas the *Toccata – Exultemus Domino* consists primarily of  $\frac{8}{16}$ , with three overall beats in a measure, the Finale from the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* features a predominance of  $\frac{7}{8}$  and  $\frac{5}{8}$ .  $\frac{7}{8}$  only appears within eight measures in the entirety of the *Toccata – Exultemus Domino*, while  $\frac{5}{8}$  is not used, and a total of seven different metres are featured in the Finale. Although the *Toccata – Exultemus Domino* also features a total of seven different metres, the metres do not change as frequently, with some passages consisting of as many as fourteen consecutive measures of the same metre.

Figure 13A-B. Excerpt of mm. 4-7 of the *Toccata – Exultemus Domino* (top) and the opening of the Finale (bottom).

These four works inform many of the choices I make within the composing of the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, and also create the opportunity to borrow and improve upon material and ideas used in these previously composed works. With the musical influences on this new work now outlined in detail, Section II offers analysis of the techniques employed in the composition.

## II: Analysis

### 1: Form

#### 1. 1: Overall Form and Structure

The form of *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* is comprised of three main sections: an Introduction, followed by a Theme and nine variations, and a Finale. Table 1 details each section within the form.

Section	Introduction	Theme	Var. I	Interlude A	Var. II	Var. III
<i>Measures</i>	1-39	40-44	45-56	57-60	61-80	81-92
<i>Proportion</i>	0' 00"-1' 26"	1' 27"-2' 18"	2' 19"-2' 52"	2' 53"-3' 03"	3' 04"-4' 12"	4' 13"-4' 37"
<i>Pitch Centre</i>	C	C	C	Unstable	E	C
<i>Tempo</i>	♩ = 80	♩ = 60	♩ = 80	♩ = 80	♩ = 54	♩ = 120
Section (cont.)	Interlude B	Var. IV	Var. V	Var. VI	Interlude C	Var. VII
<i>Measures</i>	93-95	96-108	109-124	125-138	139-140	141-151
<i>Proportion</i>	4' 38"-4' 42"	4' 43"-5' 46"	5' 47"-6' 57"	6' 58"-8' 19"	8' 20"-8' 35"	8' 36"-9' 10"
<i>Pitch Centre</i>	Unstable	F	G#	A	Unstable	G
<i>Tempo</i>	♩ = 120	♩ = 50	♩ = 40	♩ = 40	Rit.	♩ = 76
Section (cont.)	Variation VIII	Variation IX	Interlude D	Finale	Coda	
<i>Measures</i>	152-168	169-179	180-183	184-333	334-350	
<i>Proportion</i>	9' 11"-10' 48"	10' 49"-11' 45"	11' 46"-11' 59"	12' 00"-14' 45"	14' 46"-15' 03"	
<i>Pitch Centre</i>	C	E	Unstable	C/Unstable	C	
<i>Tempo</i>	♩ = 60	♩ = 50	Accel.	♩ = 160	♩ = 160	

Table 1. The overall formal structure.

Some variations are bridged by interludes, including Variations I (mm. 57-60), III (mm. 93-95), and VI (mm. 139-140), as well as an interlude connecting Variation IX to the Finale (mm. 180-183). Others are not bridged by an interlude, with a simple bassline motion linking the adjacent variations and effecting the key change. The end of Variation IV, in F minor, moves to Variation V, in G# minor, by way of an ascending bassline of F – G – G#, in place of a pivot chord, which bridges the two variations. Others, such as Variations V into IV, and Variations VIII into IX, change keys directly, with the final chord of the preceding variation having some relation to the first chord of the following variation.

## 1. 2: Internal Structures of the Introduction and Finale

Both the Introduction and the Finale feature subsections, each being through-composed. The Introduction consists of four subsections, mm. 1-11, mm. 12-23, mm. 24-35, and mm. 36-39. Each showcases a different texture, but all are characterized by the frequently employment of chromaticism. The fourth subsection, effectively a codetta, gradually releases tension, with a slower harmonic rhythmic and less rhythmic activity, pausing on an embellished half cadence.

The Finale comprises of eight subsections, forming a modified rondo form, as outlined in Table 2.

Section	A	B	C	B'	D	E	A'	Coda
<i>Measures</i>	184-205	206-216	217-239	240-252	253-273	274-296	297-333	334-250
<i>Pitch Centre</i>	C	Unstable	F#/ D/ Unstable	Eb/ Unstable	C/ Eb	Unstable	C	C

Table 2. The modified rondo form of the Finale.

Within these eight sections, B' reuses material from B, although truncating and rearranging it. Likewise, A' is a reuse and expansion of the material in A. In the A section, the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* chant is heard in the pedals, but this consists of only a variation of the first phrase of the melody. When A' appears as the penultimate section, all five phrases of the chant are used, although not occurring continuously, instead having intervening passages between each phrase. Sections C, D, E, and the Coda all reuse material from the Introduction, even though the music of C appears after the music of D and E in the Introduction, essentially reordering the earlier material to avoid predictability.

C reuses music from mm. 24-35, D from mm. 1-11, E from mm. 12-23, and the Coda from mm. 36-39, although in each repurposing, the metrical structures are greatly altered through the use of a combination of regular and irregular metres. Placing the opening material of the Introduction near the end of the Finale also creates an overarching sense of continuity within the composition as a whole. See Figure 14A-B to compare of mm. 12-14 and mm. 274-279.

The figure displays two musical staves, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass line. The top staff, labeled '12', shows a sequence of chords and a bass line in 3/4 time. The bottom staff, labeled '274', shows a rearranged version of the same material, with the chords and bass line reconfigured to fit a different metrical structure, including 2/4 and 3/4 time signatures. The notation includes various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and note values (quarter, eighth, sixteenth notes).

Figure 14A-B. Material from the Introduction at mm. 12-14 (top), and its rearrangement in the Finale at mm. 274-279 (bottom).

Through the repurposing of introductory material in the Finale, I create a sense of cohesion, with the metrical reconfigurations making the rearranged music simultaneously new and familiar for the listener.



## II. 2: Rhythmic Structure

### 2. 1: Cantus Firmus, Proportion, and Harmonic Rhythm

Within the nine variations, the proportion of each variation is tied to the cantus firmus. Although the number of measures often varies due to the desire for metrical clarity, the arc of each phrase is respected and preserved, with the exception of Variation VII, which repeats the chant and overarching phrase structure and proportionality twice in order to account for the fast tempo of  $\text{♩} = 76$ . Even in variations such as Variations IV and V, wherein the chant is highly embellished with passing tones and other alterations, the phrasal proportions of the cantus firmus are nonetheless maintained.

Similarly, a range of variability in harmonic rhythm is employed within the nine variations, and much of the harmonic rhythm is derived from the proportions in the cantus firmus. When the Solesmes notation is translated into standard notation in the Theme, each punctum becomes a quarter note, and each dotted punctum becomes a dotted half note, with only one exception in the middle of the fifth phrase. In many of the variations, such as Variation V, each beat represents one note of the cantus firmus in the pedals regardless of embellishments and expansions at cadential points, although there are some exceptions allowed in order to fit the melody into  $\text{♩}$ . Figure 15A-B compares the first phrase of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* with the first phrase of Variation V.

**Theme**

40 Adagio ( $\text{♩} = 60$ ) II. Flute 8'



**Variation V**

109 Allegro ( $\text{♩} = 40$ )

I. Principals 8', 4', 2 2/3'  
 II. 8', 4', Oboe 8'  
 Ped. 16', 8', + Reeds



Figure 15A-B. The first phrase of the Theme (top), and its derivation in Variation V (bottom).

## 2. 2: Sequence of Variations

The aforementioned sense of proportion defines much of the use of differing harmonic rhythms and how they affect the ordering of the nine variations, which are typically contrasted by a variation with a fast tempo followed by a variation with a slow tempo. Variations I, III, V, and VII all feature faster tempo indications, while Variations II, IV, VI, VIII, and IX are slower. This is not clear-cut, however, for Variation I is  $\text{♩} = 80$ , while Variation II is  $\text{♩} = 54$ . Although these appear dissimilar at first, the tempo of  $\text{♩} = 54$  when converted to simple time is  $\text{♩} = 72$ . Despite the similar tempos of Variations I and II, the harmonic rhythm creates contrast between them. Variation I, while being only slightly faster, features many changes in the harmonic rhythm at the quarter- or eighth-note level, as seen in Figure 16A, while Variation II only changes harmony on dotted-quarter notes, as seen in Figure 16B.

**Variation I**  
 45 Andante Moderato ( $\text{♩} = 80$ )  
 I. Principal 8'  
 II. Trumpet 8'  
 Ped. 16', 8', I / Ped.

**Variation II**  
 61 Andante ( $\text{♩} = 54$ )  
 II. Flute 8'  
 III. Soft Reed 8'  
 Ped. Soft Reed 8'

Figure 16A-B. Contrast created through differing harmonic rhythms despite similar tempos in Variation I (left) and Variation II (right).

The overall pattern with the variations is a fast tempo followed by a slow tempo; based on this, Variation IX should be fast, since it follows Variation VIII which is slow. This cannot be the case, however, for Variation IX immediately proceeds the Finale, which is the fastest section of the entire work. To accommodate two consecutive slow variations, with Variation VIII at  $\text{♩} = 60$  and Variation IX at  $\text{♩} = 50$ , I took a distinct approach to the harmonic rhythm therein. Variation VIII is

rearrangement of the harmonic progression which undergirds the Theme, and with only one exception, is the exact same progression. The Theme and Variation VIII are both at  $\text{♩} = 60$ , but the chords and the resultant harmonic rhythm are doubled in augmentation within the latter. These augmented chords are also not continuous, with the first chord as a half note and the second as a staccato quarter note in many instances. Later in Variation VIII, the chords are syncopated, which creates a disconnected quality in the texture. Above the progression derived from the Theme is a running line of sixteenth-note sextuplets, which creates an intensity solely at the surface-rhythm level. Variation IX, which is only ten beats per minute slower, has an entirely different atmosphere. The chords in the manuals have a harmonic rhythm primarily based around the quarter note level, as well as some changes at the half note level. Despite the slower surface rhythm and tempo of Variation IX, its atmosphere is entirely contrasting with that of Variation VIII, as seen in Figure 17A-B.

**Variation VIII**  
 Lento ( $\text{♩} = 60$ )  
 II. String 8' (no Celeste)  
 III. Flute 8', 4'  
 Ped. Soft 16', 8, II. / Ped.  
 152  
 III  
 mf 6  
 p  
 p

**Variation IX**  
 Largo ( $\text{♩} = 50$ )  
 II. Strings 8' (with Celeste), Flute 8'  
 Ped. Solo 4'  
 169  
 II  
 pp  
 mf

Figure 17A-B. Contrast created through differing harmonic rhythms despite similar tempos in Variation VIII (left) and Variation IX (right).

### 5. 3: Phrasal Structure and Metrical Alteration

Much of the phrasal structures in the nine variations are tied to the phrasal structure found within the *Victimae Paschali Laudes* chant. The Introduction never quotes more than a few notes at a time, so it does not fall into this pattern, instead being free material. In the Finale, the careful attention to phrasal structure gains a higher importance through the employment of rapidly changing irregular metres. Seen in Figure 18, mm. 185-187 is essentially a three-measure long phrase with m. 184 as an anacrusis. When that material is repeated at mm. 188-189, I delete the third measure, which creates a sudden truncation within the phrasal structure. This is further intensified by the sudden shift into a pitch centre of  $\text{Eb}$ , a minor third higher than the first phrase, which helps to avoid predictability.

**Finale**  
184 Presto (♩ = 160)

I. Quasi-Plenum  
II. Full Swell, no mixtures, no 16'  
Ped. I. / Ped.

*ff* *non troppo legato*

Figure 18. The use of phrasal truncation to avoid predictability and intensify the material of the Finale.

This technique of truncation within the phrasal structure appears repeatedly in the Finale. In mm. 240-247, when material from mm. 205-208 is reused, I repeat this earlier passage (albeit transposed down by a minor third) verbatim but with an additional measure at the end of it, as seen in Figure 19A-B. The  $\frac{5}{8}$  measure which is appended to this phrase follows a measure of  $\frac{6}{8}$ . Since the  $\frac{5}{8}$  is grouped as  $\frac{3}{8} + \frac{2}{8}$ , it creates the sense that the  $\frac{6}{8}$  pattern is continuing, but then the group of  $\frac{3}{8}$  at the end of this measure suddenly launches the music into the next phrase.

205

239

Figure 19A-B. The material from mm. 205-208 (top), which is expanded at mm. 239-243.

Similarly, the material at mm. 239-243 is immediately repeated (albeit transposed down a minor sixth), but again with truncation. Whereas in mm. 239-243 a measure of  $\frac{6}{8}$  is preceded by two measures of  $\frac{5}{8}$ , I subvert the listener's expectations, but including a third measure of  $\frac{5}{8}$ , as seen in Figure 20A-B. The music then abruptly shifts to a transposition of the ascending pattern seen in m. 205, m. 239, and m. 244. By frequently switching between different metres, as well as truncating or expanding the structures of phrases, especially when repeated, I avoid predictability in the Finale.

The figure displays two systems of musical notation. The top system, labeled '239', shows measures 239 through 243. It features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass staff. The meter changes from 7/8 to 5/8, then to 6/8, and back to 5/8. The bottom system, labeled '244', shows measures 244 through 248. It also features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass staff. The meter changes from 7/8 to 5/8, then to 6/8, and back to 5/8. A text box in the bottom system reads 'add Reeds 16', 8''.

Figure 20A-B. The use of truncation and metrical shifts to subvert the listener's expectations in mm. 239-243 (top) and mm. 244-248 (bottom).

Another example of this toying with expectation through metrical shifts and phrasal structure is at mm. 253-296. In this passage, I repurpose the Introduction's material from mm. 1-23. In mm. 253-258, the opening phrase, seen in Figure 21A, is recalled in  $\frac{3}{4}$ , as appears does originally, although without the anacrusis and doubled in note value to accommodate the doubled tempo of the Finale. The sudden introduction of multiple measures of a standard time signature creates a sense of ease after so many irregular metres. This is short lived, however, for the material from mm. 4-5 reappears at mm. 259-261 in  $\frac{3}{8}$ , and with slight adjustments in the melodic lines in the manuals, seen in Figure 21B. This alternation of  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{3}{8}$  in consecutive phrases happens again when the material from mm. 6-8 is likewise reintroduced and altered at mm. 262-267.

Moderato ( $\text{♩} = 80$ )

Figure 21A-B shows two musical systems. The top system, measures 1-5, is in 3/4 time and marked Moderato ( $\text{♩} = 80$ ). It features a piano introduction with a treble staff containing chords and a bass staff with a melodic line. The bottom system, measures 253-261, shows the reuse and rearrangement of this material. The notation is similar but adapted for the new context, with some changes in the bass line and the final measure.

Figure 21A-B. The original material from mm. 1-5 (top), and its reuse and rearrangement at mm. 253-261 (bottom).

The music from mm. 9-11 remains in  $\frac{3}{4}$ , again with doubled note values, but it is the material from mm. 12-19, an excerpt of which is seen in Figure 22A, which is most radically repurposed. In mm. 274-289, this music undergoes many metrical alterations. I elongate the first two  $\frac{3}{4}$  measures in each phase, such as at mm. 12-13, which each become a combination of one measure of  $\frac{2}{4}$  followed by a measure of  $\frac{5}{8}$ . The third measure of the original phrase, such as m. 14, becomes a measure of  $\frac{7}{8}$  followed by  $\frac{2}{4}$ , seen in Figure 22B. This metrical pattern is repeated in mm. 274-279, and follows the same transposition as mm. 15-17.

Figure 22A-B shows two musical systems. The top system, measures 12-14, is in 3/4 time and features a piano introduction with a treble staff containing chords and a bass staff with a melodic line. The bottom system, measures 274-279, shows the metrical alteration of this material. The notation is similar but adapted for the new context, with some changes in the bass line and the final measure.

Figure 22A-B. The material from mm. 12-14 (top), and its metrical alteration in mm. 247-259 (bottom).

As unexpected the metrical shifts in mm. 274-277 are, it is the reuse of mm. 18-20, seen in Figure 23A, which employs perhaps the most subversive of all the metrical alterations in the Finale. Seen in Figure 24B, the passage begins with mm. 286-287 repeating both the metrical pattern and the musical material of the preceding two measures transposed a major second higher. At mm. 288-289, the music returns to  $\frac{3}{8}$  after the  $\frac{2}{4}$  measure, but then shifts to  $\frac{5}{8}$ . This is extremely surprising for the listener, all of the measures of  $\frac{3}{8}$  and  $\frac{5}{8}$  in mm. 274-287 have been grouped as  $\text{♪} + \text{♪} + \text{♪♪}$  and  $\text{♪} + \text{♪♪}$ . The  $\frac{5}{8}$  at m. 289 is suddenly  $\text{♪♪♪} + \text{♪}$ , which follows the grouping of  $\text{♪♪♪}$  in the previous measure of  $\frac{3}{8}$ . With these grouping in mind, the upward pedal line in mm. 288-289 seems to accelerate until it arrives at the high C in m. 290, greatly subverting the listener's expectations.

The image contains two musical staves. The top staff, labeled '18', shows measures 18-20. It features a piano introduction with a complex, shifting rhythm in the right hand and a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand. The bottom staff, labeled '286', shows measures 286-290. It features a later passage where the metrical pattern is reused but with unexpected shifts, including a 5/8 measure at the end.

Figure 23A-B. The original passage from mm. 18-20 (top), and its unexpected metrical reconfiguration in mm. 268-290 (bottom).

## 2. 4: Rhythm and Counterpoint

Within contrapuntal variations, particularly Variations II and IV, the rhythms employed are identical between the canonic voices. Contrapuntal textures, such as fugues, tend to feature a high degree of rhythmic independence between the subject, answer, countersubject, and freely composed accompanying material. Neither of my most strongly contrapuntal variations exhibit this tendency. This is a deliberate choice, for Variation II includes a running sixteenth-note line throughout, which creates a sense of forward propulsion in spite of the regularity of the dotted-quarter notes in the canonic voices, seen in Figure 24.

Variation II

61 Andante ( $\text{♩} = 54$ )

II. Flute 8'  
III. Soft Reed 8'  
Ped. Soft Reed 8'

Figure 24. The running sixteenth-note line and consistent use of dotted-quarter notes in the canon.

Variation IV features a mirror canon, further detailed in II. 4. 1, in which the varied chant melody in the right hand is diatonically inverted in a mirror effect, but with the same rhythms throughout in order to emphasize this mirrored quality. Seen in Figure 25, this is also a slow, quiet variation, with a tempo of  $\text{♩} = 50$ , making the mirror canon part of the meditative texture of this variation, and not the primary focus.

Variation IV

96 Grave ( $\text{♩} = 50$ )

I. Solo Flute 8'  
II. String 8' (no Celeste)  
Ped. Solo Flute 8'

Figure 25. The mirror canon in Variation IV and the rhythmic relationships therein.

## 2. 5: Foreground Rhythm

Several variations contrast the foreground or surface rhythm with the background or harmonic rhythm. Variations II, III, and VIII prominently feature running lines of sixteenth notes, eighth-note triplets, and sixteenth-note sextuplets respectively, while the harmonic rhythm progresses in dotted-quarter notes, quarter notes, and half notes respectively. Other variations, such as Variation VII, feature a combination of both a fast harmonic rhythm and surface rhythm. While the G is heard as a rearticulated drone, the harmonies in the manuals change rapidly, often with little or no relation to the G which forms the pitch centre of this variation, as seen in Figure 26.



**Variation VII**  
141 *Con moto* (♩ = 76)

I. 8', 4', 2', + Mix.
II. Reeds 8', 4'
Ped. 16', 8', Reeds 16', 8'

Figure 26. The use both quick harmonic and surface rhythms in Variation VII.

Also regarding foreground rhythm is the use of rhythmically repeated chords in the Finale, seen in Figure 27. Appearing in passages such as m. 186-187 and others, this rhythmic repetition of a single chord is something that does not appear previously in my catalogue. Inspired in part by the similar hammering of chords in Escaich's *Vers L'Esperance* as referenced in I. 3. 5, I incorporate these rhythmic repetitions to continue a motoric use of rhythm, even when the harmonic rhythm is slower.

**Finale**  
184 *Presto* (♩ = 160)

I. Quasi-Plenum
II. Full Swell, no mixtures, no 16'
Ped. I. / Ped.

Figure 27. The use of rhythmic repetitions to continue a motoric rhythm sense in the midst of the pausing of the harmonic rhythm.

## II. 3: Harmony

### 3. 1: Messiaen's Third Mode of Limited Transposition and a Motivic Hexachord

Relating to the harmonic rhythm, *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* contains a wide variety of harmonic constructions. While major and minor triads, as well as extended triads, form the backbone of this composition, there are a number of other sonorities which prominently colour the overall soundscape. The hexachord which opens the piece is the most obvious, seen in Figure 28. Containing the pitches C $\flat$ , D $\sharp$ , E $\flat$ , G $\flat$ , G $\sharp$ , and B $\flat$ , it belongs to Allen Forte's 6-20 collection. This sonority occurs in the Third Mode of Limited Transposition described by French organist-composer Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992), also known as Messiaen Mode 3, shown in Figure 29. I discovered this sonority through experimentation, as outlined in I. 4. 3. It exhibits a broad, spacious quality, and since it lacks tritones, it also possesses an unusual degree of stability in spite of its high level of dissonance.

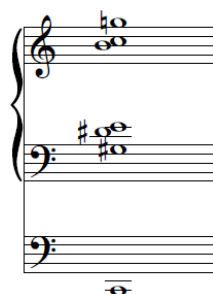


Figure 28. The Forte 6-20 hexachord.

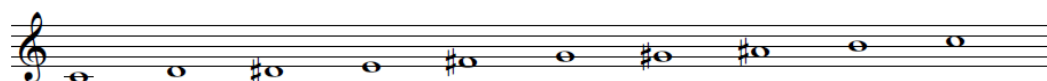


Figure 29. Messiaen's Third Mode of Limited Transposition, built on C.

### 3. 2: Harmonic Implications of Messiaen's Third Mode of Limited Transposition

Also originating from Messiaen Mode 3 are the chords and progressions in the passage from mm. 24-32, seen in Figure 30. Table 3 features all of the triads possible in this mode when built on C. The aforementioned hexachord appears, but other triads are also employed, such as minor triads and augmented triads, the latter of which I have been avoided in all previous compositions. In m. 25, in the first and third beats, again seen in Figure 30, I quickly alternate between G $\sharp$  Minor and G $\sharp$  Major,

although spelling the B $\sharp$  as C $\flat$  to reduce the number of accidentals. This quickly-shifting harmonic parallelism also does not appear in my previous works. The C-Half-Diminished-Seventh chord (although spelled with sharps instead of flats) on beat two of m. 25 is another sonority which occurs in Messiaen Mode 3. A half-diminished-seventh chord built on the second scale degree in minor keys typically functions as a substitute for the dominant-seventh in minor within my catalogue, due to the tritone inherent to half-diminished-seventh chords. The non-functional use of this chord in m. 25, as well as its transposition in m. 28, is therefore unique in my œuvre.



Figure 30. An excerpt of mm. 24-32, featuring harmonies and progressions exclusively derived from Messiaen's Third Mode of Limited Transposition.

Major Triads	Minor Triads	Augmented Triads	Diminished Triads
C	c	C+	c $^{\circ}$
D $\sharp$	d $\sharp$	D+	e $^{\circ}$
E	e	D $\sharp$ +	G $\sharp^{\circ}$
G	g		
G $\sharp$	g $\sharp$		
B	b		

Table 3. All triads found within Messiaen's Third Mode of Limited Transposition, built on C.

### 3. 3: Use of the Acoustic Scale

Other sonorities used within the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* composition include a seven-note chord, seen in Figure 31, originating from the Acoustic Scale built on D, seen in Figure 32. This scale, also called the Overtone Scale,<sup>15</sup> results from the eighth through

<sup>15</sup> Ian Ring, "Scale 1749: Acoustic," Ian Ring, accessed November 10, 2021, <https://ianring.com/musictheory/scales/1749>.

the fourteenth partials of the harmonic series, adjusted for equal temperament, and can also be considered a rotation of the ascending melodic-minor scale, beginning on the fourth scale degree. It is a major-type scale, with a raised fourth, and a lowered seventh. The chord in Figure 31 is voiced as a polychord, with D Major and E Major, the only major triads in this scale, both in closed position with the octave on top, and, C, the remaining pitch within the scale, as the bass note. I use this sonority a few times as found in Figure 31, such as in m. 36 and mm. 334-335, although it also appears with the two triads in each hand in different inversions, due to voice-leading considerations, such as the third chord of m. 21.



Figure 31. The seven-note polychordal voicing resulting from the Acoustic Scale.

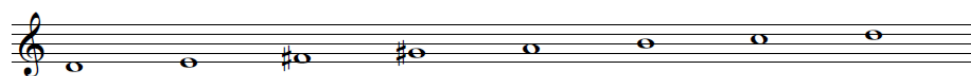


Figure 32. The Acoustic Scale, built on D.

Another sonority originating from the Acoustic Scale is a major triad, with a minor seventh, major ninth, and augmented eleventh above it. This six-note chord is effectively a major triad with an augmented triad built on the minor seventh above the root of the major triad, as seen in Figure 33. It appears in m. 22 (first chord) and m. 293 (second chord).



Figure 33. Another chord resulting from the Acoustic Scale, built on A $\flat$ .

### 3. 4: *Petrushka* and the Tritone Scale

Another sonority which features prominently in the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* is the “Petrushka Chord,” seen in Figure 34. A highly dissonant polychord, created by combining two major triads related by a tritone, it takes its name from the 1911 ballet *Petrushka* by Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971).



Figure 34. The “Petrushka Chord,” built on G and Db.

I first used this polychord in *Postlude*, a short organ work composed in 2018, where it functions as an embellished dominant chord at the final cadence. It is used in this way in the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, although appearing far more frequently than in *Postlude*. Within the Introduction, it is used once, at m. 39, and seven times in the Finale, most noticeably at mm. 340–343. In this last instance, seen in Figure 35, instead of pausing on this chord in a typical penultimate cadential fashion, the pedals suddenly burst into eighth notes, although not in Messiaen Mode 3, as is the case in the Introduction.



Figure 35. The use of the Tritone Scale in the pedals in m. 225.

In this passage, the pedal scale in mm. 340–341 is the Tritone Scale,<sup>16</sup> a six-note scale formed from the pitches of the “Petrushka Chord,” seen in Figure 36A. The Tritone Scale takes its name from the tritone-relation of the triad pair which lends the scale its pitch content. This scale can also be

<sup>16</sup> Ian Ring, “Scale 1235: Tritone Scale,” Ian Ring, accessed November 10, 2021, <https://ianring.com/musictheory/scales/1235>.

understood as truncation of Messiaen Mode 2, also known as the Octatonic Scale, seen in Figure 36B, but with the third and seventh notes removed.

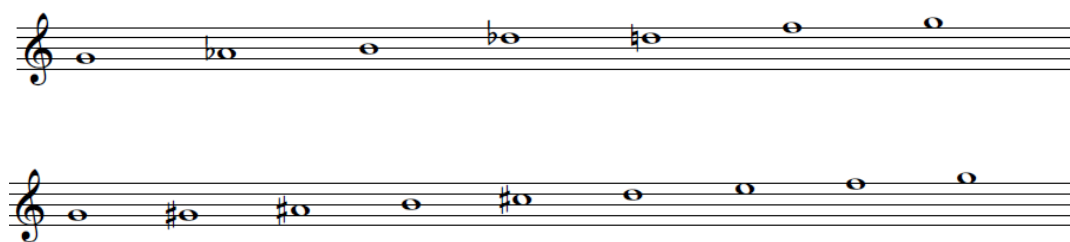


Figure 36A-B. The Tritone Scale built on G (top), and the Octatonic Scale built on G (bottom).<sup>17</sup>

This polychord has dominant function, in spite of its dissonance, for one chord acts as the dominant, while the chord related by a tritone acts as the flat-two of the scale, both of which have attraction to the tonic, although it is somewhat atypical within functional Common Practice harmony for the flat-two to resolve in this way. Either half of the polychord chord can be the dominant or flat-two, allowing it to resolve in two directions, each of which are a tritone apart.

### 3. 5: The Spanish Phrygian Scale

One scale which appears in the Finale and is not found anywhere else in my catalogue is the Spanish Phrygian scale.<sup>18</sup> As the title suggests, it is similar to the Phrygian mode, but with the addition of a major third. Figure 37A-B compares the two.



Figure 37A-B. The Spanish Phrygian scale (top) and the Phrygian mode (bottom).

The Spanish Phrygian scale appears in the Finale, most notably in m. 195-199 and again in mm. 308-333 within the pedal parts of each passage. As the name suggests, it is prominently used in

<sup>17</sup> Ian Ring, "Scale 1235: Tritone Scale," Ian Ring, accessed November 10, 2021, <https://ianring.com/musictheory/scales/1235>.

<sup>18</sup> Ian Ring, "Scale 1467: Spanish Phrygian," Ian Ring, accessed November 10, 2021, <https://ianring.com/musictheory/scales/1467>.

the music of the Iberian Peninsula, such as in Flamenco.<sup>19</sup> This unusual scale is not one I learned from an external source, but arises out of experimentation. At mm. 195-199 within the Finale, the chant melody occurs in the pedals with the frantic manual texture above it. In order to maximize the use of chromaticism while still outlining the shape of the *Victimae Paschali Laudes*, I lowered the second scale degree, as well as the fourth in some cases, which creates a major third within the scale, seen in Figure 38, although there is also a consistent use of the minor third. The fourth scale degree is both natural and lowered in this passage and its expansion and repetition at mm. 308-333. A scale with the minor third, major third, and perfect fourth is atypical, which indicates an atypical scale. Only the first phrase of the chant melody is used in mm. 195-199. When the entirety of the chant is quoted in the section preceding the Coda in mm. 308-333, all eight pitches of the Spanish Phrygian scale are heard.



Figure 38. One example of the Spanish Phrygian scale within the pedal line at mm. 195-199.

### 3. 6: Dominant Obscuration and the Lydian Mode

The first harmonic progression of interest is the cadential progression in mm. 137-138. Most cadential progressions are of the dominant-to-tonic relationship, but I have purposely avoided that in Variation VI. This is one of the most chromatic variations in the work, and as such, a dominant-to-tonic relationship is too obvious and out of place in this context. Instead, a G<sup>#</sup>-Minor triad takes the place of the dominant, which ascends upward to the A-Major triad to conclude this variation. I first heard such a progression in the *Messe Salve Regina* (1954) of French organist-composer Jean Langlais (1907–1991). This is likely a reference to 14th-century composer Guillaume de Machaut's *Messe de Nostre Dame* (c. 1365), which also features several examples of this type of cadential progression, one of which is seen in Figure 39.

<sup>19</sup> Jack Ballard, "The Enigmatic Spanish Phrygian: Justifying a Major Chord in a Minor Context," Academia.edu, accessed November 11, 2021, [https://www.academia.edu/15362434/The\\_Enigmatic\\_Spanish\\_Phrygian\\_Justifying\\_a\\_Major\\_Chord\\_in\\_a\\_Minor\\_Context](https://www.academia.edu/15362434/The_Enigmatic_Spanish_Phrygian_Justifying_a_Major_Chord_in_a_Minor_Context).



Figure 39. A Lydian-mode cadential progression in the *Kyrie* of *Machaut's Messe de Notre Dame*.<sup>20</sup>

This progression cannot easily be explained with the standard tools of harmonic analysis. Instead, modal theory is applicable. The Lydian mode, a major-type mode with a raised fourth scale degree, contains a minor triad built on the seventh scale degree, as opposed to the diminished triad built on the same scale degree of the major scale. With the Lydian mode in mind, the progression of G# Minor to A Major in Figure 40 is tenable. Although intriguing on its own, this cadential motion is particularly impactful, considering that the chord previous to the G#-Minor triad was an F-Major triad, which is an example of a chromatic mediant relationship, which can be explained through Neo-Riemannian analysis, as detailed in II. 3. 11. This progression F Major – G# Minor – A Major is a direct borrowing from the final three chords of the *Kyrie* of the aforementioned *Messe Salve Regina* by Langlais. Such Lydian-type progressions at cadential moments commonly feature within Langlais' œuvre, and are employed frequently in this Mass setting.



Figure 40. Lydian mode dominant obscuration, preceded by a chromatic mediant.

<sup>20</sup> Guillaume de Machaut, ed. Leo Schrade, *Kyrie* from *Messe de Notre Dame*. In *Guillaume de Machaut: Oeuvres complètes, vol. 3*, 1-4, Monaco: Editions de L'oiseau-Lyre, n.d.



### 3. 7: False Relations

One chordal construction which I have thus far not employed is that of false relations. Also known as a cross relation, this technique is the use of two different pitches of the same letter name which are separated by a semitone. This dissonance features prominently in the polyphony of the English Renaissance. Despite having sung several works from this repertoire since 2016 while in both church and chamber choirs, and being familiar with this unusual attribute, I have nonetheless avoided it, due the harshness of this sonority. Although conceived of as part of a polyphonic texture by the English Renaissance composers, I use it solely as a vertical sonority. Several passages in the Finale include false relations, with one Figure seen in Figure 41.



Figure 41. The use of false relations in mm. 186-187 on the last chord of each of these measures.

In m. 186, the last chord of the measure consists of the pitches B $\flat$  – D $\flat$  – D $\sharp$  – F, or a split B $\flat$  chord, with both a major and minor third. Despite the dissonance of this sonority, it arises out of voice leading, and is used in passing, allowing it to occur relatively unnoticed. The last chord of m. 187 however, is more exposed, with the pitches E $\flat$  – G $\sharp$  – B $\flat$  – D $\flat$  – G $\flat$ , although the two uppermost notes are spelled enharmonically. This is an E $\flat$ -Dominant-Seventh chord with a raised ninth. The raised ninth, F $\sharp$ , is a minor ninth above G $\sharp$ , the major third of this chord, creating a false-relation, albeit with an enharmonic spelling. Although the passage shown in Figure 41 recurs both with transposition and repetition, is it not the only instance of a false-relation.

In mm. 317-320, this dominant-seventh-raised-ninth chord appears four times in three transpositions. The last beat of the first measure in Figure 42 is identical to that of m. 186 in Figure 41. Whereas in Figure 41, the E $\flat$ -Dominant-Seventh-Raised-Ninth chord functions as an embellished dominant chord, in m. 317 of Figure 42, this chord uses its implicit polychordal nature to move not

to  $A\flat$  Major, as occurred earlier in the Finale, but to  $C\flat$  Major. This is possible through the three uppermost notes of the  $E\flat$ -Dominant-Seventh-Raised-Ninth chord:  $B\flat - D\flat - G\flat$ . This is a  $G\flat$ -Major triad, the dominant of  $C\flat$  Major, although stacked above an  $E\flat$ -Major triad and sharing the common tone of  $B\flat$ . Not only is the change from the  $E\flat$ -Dominant-Seventh-Raised-Ninth chord to  $C\flat$  Major a chromatic mediant relationship, but it is also a simultaneous dominant-to-tonic progression.



Figure 42. Each measure in the passage of mm. 317-320, featuring the use of false relations.

### 3. 8: Final Chords, Open Fifths, and the Withholding of the Tonic Triad

Within the variation section, all variations, including the theme, end with a triad, with only one exception. The Theme, along with Variations I, V, VI, VII, VIII, and IX, all end with a major triad despite the variations' overall minor tonality, while Variations II and IV end with minor triads. While this may appear to be an overabundance of Picardy Thirds, the final tonic major chords of Variations V, VII, IX are embellished with a non-chord tone known as an added ninth. Variation VIII ends with a Lydian collection, with a D-Major chord above the C-Major tonic chord, and the  $F\sharp$  and G forming a semitone dissonance at the top of this chord, as seen in Figure 43. Only Variation I features an unadorned major triad as the final chord. Variation VI is similar to Variation I in this regard, but the use of a four-two-three suspension in the Lydian mode over the major tonic triad avoid being overly predictable.



Figure 43. The Lydian chord at the end of Variation VIII.

Variation III is the only exception which cadences to a perfect fifth in m. 93, although the texture quickly moves to continue the rhythmic energy of the right hand's eighth-note triplets, with a major third within the tonality soon appearing.

To avoid predictability in the Finale, I routinely circumvent both the major and minor versions of the tonic chord built on C. The music often forms a cadence at the ends of phrases, but I purposely withhold the tonic chord, especially the tonic major, until the very end of the Finale. To do this, I employ two sonorities. First, the hexachord detailed in II. 3. 1, and the second, an open fifth, both of which are ambiguous. The hexachord features an abundance of false relations, rendering it unclear, even with C in the bass. The open fifth, while a much simpler sonority, lacks either form of the third of a triad, making it ambiguous, as well as a reprieve from the density and dissonance of the “Petrushka chord” which so frequently forms the dominant preceding these open fifth cadences.

Only at the final chord of the Finale does the elusive C-Major triad appear. Despite being the overall tonic of the entire piece, it is never heard for more than three beats. Even in the Introduction, there is no tonic arrival at the end of the movement. Instead, the G and D $\flat$  “Petrushka chord” version of the dominant appears, forming an embellished half cadence. After a quarter-note rest, the Theme begins. Even at the end of the Finale, following a four-bar long “Petrushka chord” dominant, when the listener is led to believe this is the end, neither C Major nor C Minor is heard. Instead, in m. 344, two of the motivic hexachords, as staccato quarter notes, are heard. This gives the impression of ending the work on the wrong or unresolved chord, but then, after quoting the opening gesture, albeit rhythmically elongated, then only does a tonic chord arrive. Given the avoidance of the tonic chord in the Introduction and Finale, when the C-Major chord finally appears and is held for 14 beats or approximately eight seconds, it is a triumphant arrival at the close of the work. The final chord also features an added ninth, but is also voiced in such a way to maximize the use of perfect fifths, as seen in Figure 44. In the right hand, the voicing of G – C – D – G not only features two perfect fourths and a whole tone, but there is also a perfect fifth between G and D, and another between C and the upper G. In the left hand is a C-Major triad in second inversion, while an octave C is in the bass. Altogether, this voicing is a bright and resonant end to my composition.

340

I. Full Organ  
Ped. Full

senza rit.

fff

345

fff

Figure 44. The arrival of C Major at the end of the work.

### 3. 9: Quasi-Polychordal Sonorities

A few quasi-polychordal voicings appear in the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, but while these sonorities are voices separately as triads in each hand, they exist in a typical diatonic major scale, and are therefore not true polychords. These include a major-tonic triad in the left hand, with a major-dominant triad in the right, creating a major-ninth extended chord seen in Figure 45, or a subdominant chord in the left hand, and a dominant chord in the right hand, which creates a sonority typical of the Lydian mode, also seen in Figure 45. Although this latter chord can be considered a D Major-Eleventh chord, spelled D – F# – A – C – E – G, this interpretation destroys the brightness of the Lydian mode inherent to this sonority, for it places the C-Major triad above the D-Major triad, which is the opposite of how I employ it. Instead, it would better be interpreted as a C-Major triad, with an added ninth, raised eleventh, and a thirteenth.



Figure 45. A Major-Ninth chord (first chord), and a six-note Lydian sonority (second chord), voiced in a polychordal manner.

### 3. 10: Chordal Extensions

Along with the clear use of chromatic mediant and secundal relationships, I have added chordal extensions by thirds to many chords within the overall work, with just one example seen in Figure 46. In m. 13, the first chord has both an added major seventh and a major ninth, although voiced as separate triads, heightening the simultaneous C-Major and G-Major qualities. The second chord has the same extensions, but is arranged in a diatonic mirror voicing, while the third chord is a simple minor triad. The progressions in mm. 13-14 are sequential, but thanks to the voicings, the uppermost line descends by semitone throughout the two measures and into the beginning of the following measure. At the same time, the pedals play the Octatonic scale, also known as Messiaen's Second Mode of Limited Transposition, moving up by a whole tone followed by a semitone, although with octave displacement to maintain the register in the pedals. The pedal passage in m. 15, on beats one and two, is built from Messiaen's Third Mode of Limited Transposition, similar to the opening of the Introduction, although the harmonies in the manuals within this passage are not derived from this scale.



Figure 46. The use of chordal extensions to create a stepwise descending line in the uppermost voice, as well as the use of both Messiaen Modes 2 and 3 in the pedals.

### 3. 11: Neo-Riemannian Progressions

Regarding the types of harmonic progressions I employ, there are several Neo-Riemannian changes within my composition, as mentioned in II. 3. 6. The most prominent examples are found within the Introduction, as well as Variation VI, and are inspired in part by my interest in the music of Anton Bruckner (1824–1896). Neo-Riemannian analysis creates a framework with which to analyze complex chordal relationships, especially chromatic mediants, which are common in the music of the late Romantic period. Within the Introduction, in mm. 12-19, excerpted in Figure 47, there are several chromatic mediant relationships. Most of the progressions in Figure 44 are combinations of Neo-Riemannian transformations. ‘P’ indicates a parallel shift, from major to minor or vice versa. ‘R’ indicates the change from a major chord to its relative minor, and vice versa. ‘L’ indicates that the major third of the triad remains, but the remaining note is moved diatonically, such as C Major to E Minor, or C Minor to A $\flat$  Major. The combinations of P and R, as well as P – R – P are the most common in passage below.

The musical score excerpt shows measures 12 through 15. The top staff contains chords with the following transformations labeled above them: PR (measure 12), PRP (measure 13), R (measure 14), PR (measure 15), PRP (measure 16), R (measure 17), PR (measure 18), RPLP (measure 19), and RPRP (measure 20). The bottom staff features a continuous eighth-note bass line.

Figure 47. Neo-Riemannian chromaticism in mm. 13-15, such as PR, and PRP transformations.

### 3. 12: Progressions by a Second or Tritone

While the Neo-Riemannian system excels at explaining harmonic relationships involving mediants, it does not easily explain chords related by a second or by a tritone. In m. 15, seen in Figure 48, an A-Major triad moves to a B $\flat$ -Major triad, although both have some extensions. Such progressions naturally exist in scales such as D harmonic minor, and are found in some styles of classical composition, such as the Baroque Era, as seen in the prototypical descending tetrachord in minor, often used in ground-bass compositions. Despite the somewhat quotidian nature of this progression, it takes four transformations, R – P – L – P, to achieve it. Similarly, the harmonic relationship between two major chords separated by a tritone is also achieved through four

transformations, in this case,  $R - P - R - P$ , despite being a common progression, seen in the Common Practice era and earlier when the Neapolitan-sixth chord moves to the dominant.

[illegible]

Figure 48. Progressions by a second or tritone, not easily explained with Neo-Riemannian theory, seen in m. 15.

### 3. 13: Other Neo-Riemannian Considerations

Returning to Neo-Riemannian analysis, Variation VI features several progressions which are not easily explained with conventional tools, as seen in Figure 49. In mm. 139-140, the  $A\flat$  of the F-Minor triad is preserved enharmonically while the tonic and dominant both shift downward by a semitone, creating an E-Major triad. This forms a ‘Slide’ transformation, achieved through  $L - P - R$ . At m. 139, on beats two and three, the D-Major triad gives way to a  $B\flat$ -Minor triad (albeit with an added sixth, which in some interpretations creates a half-diminished-seventh chord), which constitutes a ‘Hexpole’ relationship, created through  $L - P - L$  transformation, and has no common tones between the two chords.

139

The musical score for Example 139 consists of two systems. The first system has a piano part (treble clef) and a double bass part (bass clef). The piano part begins with a 3/4 time signature and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a series of chords: F#m (F#2, A2, C3), F#m (F#2, A2, C3), F#m (F#2, A2, C3), and F#m (F#2, A2, C3). The double bass part begins with a 3/4 time signature and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a series of chords: F#m (F#2, A2, C3), F#m (F#2, A2, C3), F#m (F#2, A2, C3), and F#m (F#2, A2, C3). The second system has a piano part (treble clef) and a double bass part (bass clef). The piano part begins with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a series of chords: F#m (F#2, A2, C3), F#m (F#2, A2, C3), F#m (F#2, A2, C3), and F#m (F#2, A2, C3). The double bass part begins with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a series of chords: F#m (F#2, A2, C3), F#m (F#2, A2, C3), F#m (F#2, A2, C3), and F#m (F#2, A2, C3). The score is marked with a forte (f) dynamic.

Figure 49. ‘Slide’ and ‘Hexpole’ Neo-Riemannian transformations in the interlude between Variations VI and VII.

### 3. 14: Use of Sequences and Transposition

Briefly referenced in II. 3. 10, sequences form an important technique for the expansion of material. Typically, I would avoid any sequential progressions, as I have thus far considered them to be a way to fill time. In the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*, there are several passages which feature sequences. Seen in Figure 50, m. 13 is a transposition down by a minor third from m. 12. Although m. 14 begins with an F $\sharp$ -Major chord, a minor third below the first chord m. 13 and therefore continuing the pattern, the harmonic rhythm switches to eighth notes, breaking the sequence. The next phrase, from mm. 15-17, is a transposition of mm. 12-14 down by a major third. This is not a sequence, strictly speaking, but this type of phrasal transposition, particularly by chromatic mediant relationships, is a feature I have long enjoyed in my music.

Figure 50. The use of chromatic mediant relationships within sequences and transpositions of phrases.

Similarly, in mm. 19-20, seen in Figure 51, I employ another modified sequence or phrasal transposition. The entirety of m. 19 is transposed up by a whole tone when repeated in m. 20. Harmonically, the progression from the third beat of m. 19 to the first chord of m. 20 is somewhat unusual. The E $\flat$ -Major chord has an almost polytonal relationship to the following chord. The E-Major-Ninth chord is voiced with an E-Major triad in the left hand, and a B-Major triad in the right hand. E Major (enharmonically F $\flat$ ) is the flat-two chord of E $\flat$  Major, while B Major (enharmonically C $\flat$  Major) is the lowered sixth of E $\flat$  Major. The D $\sharp$  also acts as a single common tone between E $\flat$ -



Major and the E-Major-Ninth chord. Returning to the transposition of phrases, this pattern of rising by a whole step could continue, but to avoid predictability, m. 21 begins with an A $\flat$ -Major chord (although with some extensions). This is an enharmonic major third relationship between the first chords of m. 20 and m. 21, and also an enharmonic major second higher than the anticipated F $\sharp$ -Major chord which would occur if the pattern of transposition were to continue. Regardless, the pattern breaks in m. 21, in order to subvert the listener's expectations.



Figure 51. Sequence-like progressions created through the use of transposition.

Another example of large-scale transposition of phrases in the Finale is seen in Figure 52. The music from mm. 185-189 is repeated and transposed upward by a minor third. Again, to avoid predictability, m. 189 is metrical altered and expanded to two measures. This technique of phrasal transposition occurs repeatedly in the Finale.

Finale

184 Ped. I. / Ped.

*ff* *non troppo legato*

*ff*

190

Figure 52. The use of transposition of phrases in the Finale by a chromatic mediant, as well as metrical alteration and expansion.

### 3. 15: Non-Tertian Writing

Two sections in the Finale prominently feature the use of non-tertian techniques. Instead of building melodies or chords out of thirds, seconds, fourths, or fifths are used, although sonorities constructed solely from the stacking of non-tertian intervals are not employed within *the Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes*. Non-tertian writing has long escape both my interest and my understanding, but exposure to music of composers such as Gerald Bales (1919–2002) has broadened my interest in this style of writing.

Within the Finale, the passages at mm. 206-216 and mm. 240-247 both feature melodic lines constructed almost entirely from seconds and fourths. Seen in Figure 54, mm. 240-243 and mm. 245-247 features two-part writing with only one note in each hand. The melodic shapes derive primarily from a series of ascending or descending perfect fourths, with some seconds and sevenths included to allow the implicit harmonies to travel through different progressions. The resultant intervals between each line is primarily perfect fourths and perfect fifths, as well as some sixths and the occasional seventh.

Figure 53 shows two systems of musical notation for the Finale. The first system, starting at measure 239, consists of two staves. The upper staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lower staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music is written in 8/8 time. The second system, starting at measure 243, also consists of two staves with the same clefs and key signature. A text box in the second system indicates "add Reeds 16', 8'".

Figure 53. Non-tertian writing in the Finale.

## II. 4: Interactions Between Harmony and Counterpoint

### 4. 1: Mirror Canons, Dissonance, and Harmony in Variation IV

A technique which I employ for the first time in this work is that of a mirror canon. It appears in Variation IV, wherein the varied chant melody is right-side-up in the right hand, while the pedals have the melody upside-down through the process of diatonic inversion, as seen in Figure 54.

Variation IV  
96 Grave (♩ = 50)

I. Solo Flute 8'  
II. String 8' (no Celeste)  
Ped. Solo Flute 8'

mp  
pp  
mp

Figure 54. The mirror canon between the right hand and pedals in Variation IV.

Between the right hand and pedal line, the left hand supports the outer voices with a chordal underlay on a String 8' stop. Some intervals resulting from the mirror canon include a major ninth, which leads to difficulties in harmonization, particularly at mm. 102-103, seen in Figure 55, where the fifth scale degree in the right hand is inverted to become the fourth scale degree, although separated by four octaves and a major second. This is not inherently problematic, but when it is sustained, such as in m. 102, the dissonance becomes more noticeable. To soften this dissonance's impact, I harmonize it with a B $\flat$ -Minor-Seventh chord, ultimately creating a B $\flat$ -Minor-Ninth chord. Without the inclusion of the A $\flat$  in this chord, the C in the right hand and the D $\flat$  in the left hand are fairly discordant. By including the A $\flat$ , the chord is somewhat stabilized, allowing the two aforementioned dissonances to pass by almost unnoticed.

102

mp  
pp

Figure 55. The harmonization of the prolonged dissonance between the right hand's C and the pedals' B $\flat$ .

In m. 103, seen in Figure 56, the melody and its inversion return to quarter-note motion, but the dissonance between the right hand's C and the pedals' B $\flat$  appears twice more. To avoid stagnation of the harmonies, I shift the F of the B $\flat$ -Minor-Ninth chord up to a G $\flat$  while the remaining pitches remain stationary. This creates a G $\flat$ -Major chord with an added ninth, as well as the raised eleventh or 'Lydian tone.' The use of a Lydian-type sonority in m. 103 allows the right hand to move from C to B $\flat$  to C, while the pedals move from B $\flat$  to C to B $\flat$ , since both the C and B $\flat$  exist in this modal chordal construction.

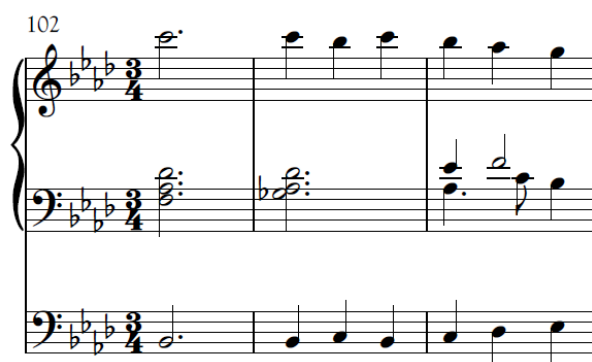


Figure 56. The use of a Lydian sonority in m. 103 to prevent harmonic stagnation while still supporting the dissonances in the mirror canon.

#### 4. 2: Harmony Through Voice Leading

At beginning of the Finale, there is a pattern within mm. 185-186 which is driven not by vertical considerations, but instead by the horizontal conceptualization. After the hexachord on the downbeat of m. 185, there is a perfect fifth of E and B. On the second beat of the measure, a C above the B and D $\sharp$  below the E are added, creating a sonority which defies conventional categorization, although is identified by Allen Forte as 4-7. The voices then each move outward by semitone within each hand on the third beat. In the right hand, B and C become B $\flat$  and D $\flat$ , while in the left hand, D $\sharp$  and E become D $\natural$  and F. This gives rise to the first false-relation sonority discussed in II. 3. 7. Following this dissonant split-third chord, in m. 186, is another chord which is born out of this pattern of voice leading. Both hands' pitches move outward again, with B $\flat$  and D $\flat$  becoming A $\flat$  and E $\flat$ , while D $\natural$  and F become C and G. Together, A $\flat$  – C – E $\flat$  – G create an A $\flat$ -Major-Seven chord. The pattern does not continue into the second beat of m. 186, for the left hand's G and the right hand's A $\flat$  are already a semitone apart, as seen in Figure 57, and would overlap if continued further.



Figure 57. The pattern of voice leading in mm. 185-186, which creates harmonic constructions that are unique in my œuvre.

Similar to the passage in mm. 185-186 is that of mm. 202-203, as seen in Figure 58. In this passage, so as to avoid direct repetition of earlier material within the Finale, I continue the voice leading pattern but with an intervening chord. After the split-third B $\flat$  chord on the third beat of m. 202, the voices in each hand move outward by a semitone instead of a whole tone, as occurred in the passage in mm. 185-186. By moving the right hand's B $\flat$  and D $\flat$  to A and D $\sharp$ , and the left hand's D $\sharp$  and F to C $\sharp$  and F $\sharp$ , I create an intermediate chord on the path to the A $\flat$ -Major-Seventh chord. The D-Major-Seventh chord in third inversion, seen in the first beat of m. 203, again follows the pattern of each set of voices expanding outward by semitone: A and D to A $\flat$  and E $\flat$ , and C $\sharp$  and F $\sharp$  to C and G. The two resulting chords, D Major Seventh and A $\flat$  Major Seventh, are not in any way related. There is a tritone relationship between them, the inclusion of the major-seventh extension makes them even less related. Were it not for this voice-leading consideration, I would not have discovered or employed this chord progression.



Figure 58. The pattern of voice leading in mm. 202-203, exhibiting sonorities and progressions which I have not used previously.

## II. 5: Counterpoint

### 5. 1: Canonic Treatment in Variation II

Contrapuntal forms rarely find employment within my compositions, with the fughetta in the middle section of my *Sortie Solennelle* (2021) being one of the few overtly contrapuntal examples. With this deficit of counterpoint in mind, I compose a canon in Variation II, with some inspiration from Ropek's *Variations on "Victimae Paschali Laudes" for Organ*, which also features a canon in his second variation, as referenced in I. 3. 2. Ropek's canon is in  $\frac{3}{4}$ , while mine is in  $\frac{9}{8}$ . He builds his canon at the fourth below, with an offset of three melodic notes, and I do likewise, with the beginning of my Variation II seen in Figure 59.

Figure 59 shows the beginning of the canon in Variation II. The score is in 9/8 time, Andante (♩ = 54). It features three staves: II. Flute 8', III. Soft Reed 8', and Ped. Soft Reed 8'. The right hand (Flute) plays a canon starting on G4, while the left hand (Pedals) plays a canon starting on G2, offset by three melodic notes. The tempo is marked Andante (♩ = 54). The score includes dynamic markings like p and mp.

Figure 59. The start of the canon in Variation II.

This offset by three melodic notes, or in this context, beats, is effective for the first and second phrases of the cantus firmus. The third phrase forms a parallel octave with the canon at the fourth below at this offset, as seen in Figure 60.

Figure 60 shows the parallel octave in the third phrase resulting from the three-note offset and canon at the fourth below in Variation II. The score is in 9/8 time, showing a parallel octave in the third phrase. The right hand (Flute) plays a phrase starting on G4, while the left hand (Pedals) plays a phrase starting on G2, offset by three melodic notes. The score includes dynamic markings like p and mp.

Figure 60. The parallel octave in the third phrase resulting from the three-note offset and canon at the fourth below in Variation II.

To avoid this parallel octave, I double the fourth note of this phrase, while also changing the offset from three beats to one. This creates a four-three suspension between the right hand and the pedals in m. 71, as seen in Figure 61.



Figure 61. My solution to the parallel octave in the third phrase of the canon.

The next phrases also has a one-note offset, due to another parallel octave which would occur at the original three-note displacement. Although the penultimate phrase would work at the original offset, I choose to continue this one-note offset, as it subtly propels the music forward toward the end of the variation. In the last phrase of the melody, the canon breaks down, with the pedals instead supply dominant-to-tonic bass motion to complete Variation II.

## 5. 2: Quasi-Organum

One Medieval form I have long found fascinating is that of organum, which is defined as the practice of singing chant melodies with parallel fifths or fourths in addition to the cantus firmus. Variation III references this Medieval practice through the consistent use of parallel fifths in the left hand. These fifths are inflected chromatically, however, and can suggest even the Locrian mode at times, as seen in Figure 62. Although there is the use of the  $G\flat$ ,  $G\sharp$  also appears. Additionally, the second scale degree is always lowered to  $D\flat$ , creating a mixed Phrygian-Locrian sound. Above this quasi-organum is a running line of triplet eighth notes throughout Variation III, which creates intensity in the surface rhythm, while also propelling the music along.

Variation III  
Allegro ( $\text{♩} = 120$ )

I. Flute 4'  
II. Principal 8'

81

Figure 62. The use of organum-like parallel fifths, although inflected with chromaticism, with a running figuration of eighth-note triplets above.

## II. 6: Texture, Register and Registration

### 6. 1: Registration and Specificity

Texture, register, and registration are closely intertwined in the composition of organ works, and constantly influence one another. Registration is the technique of combining different sets of organ pipes, also called stops, to create new timbres. I choose a varied approach toward registration, with general indications of registration in some sections, because every pipe organ is unique in its available resources, and more specific indications in other sections. For this reason, I choose indications such as, “Flute 8’,” and not “Doppelflöte 8’,” even though I may prefer the latter over a more generic flute stop at that footage, such as a Stopped Diapason 8’. Despite the variability of the specificity in the indicated registration, I do have a specific organ in mind.

### 6. 2: A Specific Organ

The organ at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian, in Ottawa, Ontario, is very similar to the organ at Saint-François-d’Assise, also in Ottawa. I took a year of organ lessons with Gilles Maurice Leclerc, as mentioned in I. 3. 1, and frequently practiced in the latter church during that year. Both organs were rebuilt back-to-back by the Québécois organbuilder Guilbault-Thérien, in the late 1980s. Matthew Larkin, organist at St. Andrew’s, describes this organ as a three-manual version of the instrument at Saint-François-d’Assise. St. Andrew’s organ features 47 stops over three manuals and pedals; the stoplist is as follows in Table 4. I envision this piece on a medium-sized three manual and pedal organ, in order to maximize timbral possibilities and to deliver a bombastic rendition of the Finale. The organ at St. Andrew’s therefore fits this description. Larkin describes the instrument:

“Although installed in 1987, the organ of St. Andrew’s Church incorporates several speaking stops which date from previous iterations (S. R Warren, 1874, and Casavant Frères, 1911 and 1938). The Guilbault-Thérien design called for “a robustly voiced instrument, possessing full reed and flue choruses on the Great, Swell, and Pedal (along with a colourful Positiv division), which will allow performances of a wide diversity of historical and contemporary repertoire”. The organ is housed in the north gallery of the sanctuary, and speaks clearly into the main body of the church. The final scheme was overseen by the late Anthony King, who was director of music at the church from 1984-92.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Matthew Larkin, email message to author, November 12, 2021.



Great	Swell	Choir	Pedal
16' Quintaton	16' Lieblich	8' Gedeckt	16' Principal Bass
8' Principal	8' Principal	8' Quintadena	16' Subbass
8' Bourdon	8' Bourdon	4' Principal	16' Lieblich Bourdon
4' Octave	8' Viole de Gambe	4' Spillflöte	8' Octave Bass
4' Spitzflöte	8' Voix Celeste	2 2/3' Nazard	8' Bourdon
2 2/3' Quinte	4' Spitzprincipal	2' Gemshorn	4' Choral Bass
2' Octave	4' Nason	1 3/5' Tierce	2' Nachthorn
V Cornet	2' Waldflöte	1 1/3' Quintflöte	IV Mixture
V Mixture	V Plein Jeu	III-IV Cymbal	32' Contra Fagotto
8' Trompette	16' Fagott	8' Cromorne	16' Posaune
4' Clairon	8' Trompette	Tremulant	16' Fagott
	8' Hautbois	Zimbelstern	8' Trompette
	4' Clairon		4' Clairon
	Tremulant		

Table 4. The stoplist of the Guilbault-Thérien organ at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, in Ottawa, Ontario.<sup>22</sup>

### 6. 3: Considerations Regarding Manual and Pedal Compasses

Another consideration is the manual and pedal compasses, or the number of keys on a given keyboard. Many organs built in the last hundred years have a manual compass of 61 keys, or five octaves, and a pedalboard compass of 32 notes, although this is not common in organs built before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both organs at St. Andrew's and Saint-François-d'Assise have a manual compass of 56 notes, or four and a half octave, with G as the highest key instead of C, and the pedal compass is 30 notes, making F the highest pedal instead of G. While a manual compass of 61 notes and a pedal compass of 32 notes is more common nowadays, there are still many extant organs which are built with smaller compasses, especially in Europe. I therefore resist the urge within the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* to exceed the highest note of the compasses on the organ at St. Andrew's. The high E in Variation IX is the highest pedal note, and the high F<sup>♯</sup>, appearing in Variations VII and VIII as well as in the Finale, is the highest note on the manuals, allowing my composition to be performed on as many different organs as possible.

<sup>22</sup> "Guilbault-Thérien (Opus 27, 1987) St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church." Pipe Organ Database. Accessed November 1, 2021. <https://pipeorgandatabase.org/organ/60260>.

## 6. 4: Specific Registration and Textural Considerations

In some places, I choose to use specific registration in order to heighten the character of the variation, such as in Variation V, seen in Figure 63. I choose to indicate Principal stops at 8' and 4' pitch, as well as a mutation stop at 2 2/3' in the Great manual. This last stop sounds an octave and a perfect-fifth higher than written, and brightens the timbre. In beats two and three of each measure in Variation V, the music switches to the Swell manual, with unspecified stops at 8' and 4' pitch, as well as an Oboe 8'. The first two stops are indicated generally, to allow the organist to balance the forte dynamic of the Great's registration with the mezzo-forte of the Swell in spite of the variability between different organs. The Oboe 8' stop is specified, as this type of stop has a particular timbre which blends well with both Principal-type stops as well as Flutes, while also increasing the weight of the registration. A Clarinet 8', for example, as a solo-type stop, does not possess the same ability to blend, and a Trumpet 8' would be overpowering in this context.

**Variation V**

109 Allegro (♩ = 40)

I. Principals 8', 4', 2 2/3'  
 II. 8', 4', Oboe 8'  
 Ped. 16', 8', + Reeds

Figure 63. The registration of Variation V, which creates an antiphony of timbres.

The switching between the Great and Swell manuals in this variation creates an antiphonal quality, as if the timbres of the two manuals are in dialogue. Given that the varied chant melody is placed in the pedals, I have chosen to include reed stops to make this line stand out from the registration of the manuals, and avoid it appearing to the listener as only a bassline and not as a more foreground element. Also considering that the melody occurs only twice in the low register of the pedals, namely in Variation V and in the Finale, the inclusion of reed stops increase the presence of the melody within the texture.

Similar registration choices are made in Variation VII, as seen in Figure 64. Foundations stops at 8', 4', 2', plus a mixture stop on the first and fourth beats of each bar contrast with reeds at 8' and 4' on beats two and three. Both registrations are loud, but in order to maximize the difference of the

musical material, the different families of stops increase the timbral juxtaposition while also increasing the intensity of this fast, highly-chromatic variation.

Variation VII  
141 Con moto (♩ = 76)

I. 8', 4', 2', + Mix.
II. Reeds 8', 4'
Ped. 16', 8', Reeds 16', 8'

Figure 64. The registration choices in Variation VII.

Although the indication of Trumpet 8' and Clarion 4' on the Swell instead of the generic indication of Reeds 8', 4' would be acceptable, I opt for less specificity since there may be additional reeds on a given organ, such as a Tuba 8'. To indicate what I intend, I include the marking of Reeds 8', 4', as well as a fortissimo dynamic marking. This gives the organist the impression of what type of registration I wish to create, without becoming too specific in the case of additional resources. Reeds and principals have a highly distinct timbre from each other, and although reeds can be included to add more presence and volume in conjunction with the foundation stops, as seen in the coda at m. 334. Reeds stand out when juxtaposed by themselves against other families of stops, due to their brassy quality and different construction, which creates a dialogue of timbres, a technique not exploited elsewhere in my catalogue. The louder registration also thickens a texture which is otherwise somewhat sparse, particularly on the first and fourth beats where the two lines on the manuals move in parallel fifths.

Regarding the pedal registration in Variation VII, I indicate simply 16', 8', as well as Reeds 16', and 8'. The use of the pedal reeds in the context of the rearticulated pedal drone add a great deal of weight and presence to the pedal part, allowing it balance out with the loud manuals. I avoid the use of manual-to-pedal couplers in this variation in order to prevent amplifying the abrasiveness of the manual chords against the pedal ostinato. If the Swell manual, with the chromatic chords, was coupled to the pedals, the 4' stop would cause the G♭ to rub harshly against the chromatic chords in the manuals at the 8' pitch level. The pitch content of the material in the manuals within Variation VII is rarely connected to the pedals' G♭, and there are many instances of false-relations in the manuals

above the pedal line, with chords such as EbM, and EM, as well as F#M and others appearing in the manuals. By not coupling the Great to the pedals, the dissonances remain in a higher register without interference from the pedal ostinato.

## 6. 5: Use of Registration to Create Contrast in Register

Registration afford the creation of textures such as that of Variation IX, as seen in Figure 65. Strings 8', including the Celeste,<sup>23</sup> as well as a Flute 8', are indicated in the manuals, with both hands in the lowest register and written in the bass clef. The use of a 4' solo stop allows the pedals to play the varied chant in a range above the manuals, which creates contrast internally within the variation by way of timbre and register. This juxtaposition of the strings and flute against the solo pedal stop creates a texture unheard in the rest of the composition and is unique in my output.

Figure 65. Variation IX's use of a 4' pedal stop to carry the melody above the manuals.

In the registration for the Swell manual in Variation IX, I choose to include the Flute 8' in case the Celeste 8' does not continue into the lowest octave of the Swell manual. It is fairly common for the Celeste 8' to exist from the so-called "tenor C" and upward, so the use of a Flute 8' helps to give the strings some additional colour and a stronger presence in the lowest register.

## 6. 6: Homophonic Chordal Textures

Different types of textures lend themselves to specific registration. Variation VI is the quietest passage and features chordal homophony. To allow these homophonic, chromatic chords to shimmer, I indicate Strings 8', plus the Super coupler, if available, which adds the same stop at the octave above and increases the lushness of the strings. Soft flue stops are used in the pedals at 16' and 8', with the Swell manual coupled down, which includes the string stops, as seen in Figure 66. The Swell manual is always enclosed in a box with shutters, which creates the opportunity for dynamic contrasts through

<sup>23</sup> A Celeste 8' stop, also known as a Voix Celeste, is a string-type stop, but is purposely tuned slightly sharp, in order to create a richness akin to vibrato when used in conjunction with the main string stop, usually a Voile de Gambe 8'.

the opening and closing of the shutters. Considering this, I indicate for the organist to open and close these shutters for dynamic and expressive effect, instead of relying solely on contrasts in registration, as is typical of my previous organ works.

**Variation VI**  
125 Largo (♩ = 40)

II. Strings 8' + Celeste (+ Super)  
Ped. Soft 16', 8', II. / Ped.

Figure 66. The use of string stops and dynamic expression in Variation VI's homophonic texture.

## 6. 7: Registration in Melody-and-Accompaniment Textures

Melody-and-accompaniment style forms the basis of Variation I, and is registered as such. A Trumpet 8' carries the varied chant melody in the right hand, while the left hand and pedals use principal stops, with eight-foot pitch in the left hand on the Great manual, and sixteen- and eight-foot pitch in the pedals, plus the Great coupled down. Seeing as this variation follows the Theme, which is played on a Flute 8' at a medium dynamic level, the uses of both the loud Trumpet 8' and the principal stops intensifies this already active texture, as well as contrasting with the preceding Theme, seen in Figure 67.

**Variation I**  
45 Andante Moderato (♩ = 80)

I. Principal 8'  
II. Trumpet 8'  
Ped. 16', 8', I. / Ped.

Figure 67. The melody-and-accompaniment style of Variation I.

## 6. 8: Texture, Registration, and the Sequence of Variations

In II. 5. 1., I explain how harmonic rhythmic aids in the differentiation between variations with similar tempos, as well as how the typically ordering of variations is essentially fast then slow and

so on, although with some exceptions. Similarly, the fast variations feature a louder dynamic level in contrast with the slow variations, which feature a softer dynamic. As such, Variations I, III, V, and VII are loud, while Variations II, IV, VI, VIII, and IX are all quieter. The use of registration makes this possible, as some of the loud variations employ sparser textures than some of the quiet variations, such as Variations VI and VII, seen in Figure 68A-B.

**Variation VI**  
125 *Largo* (♩ = 40)  
II. Strings 8' + Celeste (+ Super)  
Ped. Soft 16', 8', II. / Ped.  
ppp  
pp

**Variation VII**  
141 *Con moto* (♩ = 76)  
I. 8', 4', 2', + Mix.  
II. Reeds 8', 4'  
Ped. 16', 8', Reeds 16', 8'  
ff  
f

Figure 68A-B. The thick, chordal texture of Variation VI (left), and the sparser texture of Variation VII (right), contrasted through registration.

Regarding the use of Full Organ, I save this until m. 340, which precedes the final chord by only six measures. I choose to withhold it until this point to make the end the most bombastic part of the entire work. While I could introduce it earlier, Full Organ, especially on an organ with three or more manuals, such as that of St. Andrew's Guilbault-Thérien, is very loud, and becomes tiring for the listener if used for extended passages. As such, I save it for the last dramatic "Petrushka chord," at mm. 340-343 through to the end.

Through the employment of techniques involving form, rhythm, harmony, counterpoint, texture, register, and registration, I have composed a new organ work which is unique within my own catalogue, but also a welcome contribution to the longstanding tradition of chant-based organ repertoire.

### III: Epilogue

#### 1. Lessons from the Compositional Process

The process of composing the *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* was both challenging and enjoyable. I struggled at first with find an idea with which to begin the entire work when I began the process in August. In late July 2021, I discovered the *Final* from my friend and former teacher Gilles Leclerc's *Triptyque sur le choral "Nun Komm' Der Heiden Heiland"*. As I mention in I. 3. 1, this work features the use of a dissonant sonority as a harmonic motif, which creates cohesion throughout the disparate sections and textures within the overall form. This concept, as well as the dramatic nature of this movement, stuck with me, although I was unsure of how to proceed with such an idea. In early August 2021, I recalled a sonority I discovered through experimentation, as mentioned in II. 3. 1. I had initially created it in February 2021, but had not yet found a use for it thus far. Suddenly, the use of this dissonant sonority fused together in my mind with the concept of a harmonic motif, and this sparked the composition of the Introduction. Within a matter of approximately three weeks, I had composed much of the Introduction as it stands in this final version.

The Theme was more difficult. As it currently stands, the harmonies are predominantly triadic while also highly chromatic in the harmonic relationships employed. The original Theme area was essentially diatonic, and fell flat after the dramaticism of the predicting Introduction. I recalled a progression I had experimented with earlier on, in which a minor triad slides downward to another minor triad related by a semitone, as seen in m. 40 on the third and fourth beats. This little example of chromaticism gave rise to the chromaticism employed within the Theme area.

Regarding the nine variations, I wrote them in the order in which they appear. A few other ideas for variations were briefly worked on, but they lacked the necessary focus or originality to be included. Variation II was the most difficult to compose out of the nine variations. I initially composed the canon with the melody beginning in the pedals and echoed by the right hand. While this did work for the first two phrases, the third phrase created the aforementioned parallel octave, which lead me to try another approach. Although placing the melody first in the right hand and then echoed in the pedals also created this issue, some of the implied harmonies were easier to work into the left hand's running sixteenth-note pattern. Once the solution detailed in II. 5. 1 was realized, it allowed me to complete the variation and make other adjustments to the melody's successive entries.

Variation VII needed careful treatment of the material in the manuals. The eighth-note

outburst in the middle beats of each measure with sixteenth-note flourishes in the first and fourth beats occurred in every measure in the original draft. This quickly became predictable, leading to the introduction of a disruption of this pattern in mm. 148-149. Similarly, I also changed the scale employed in the sixteenth-note patterns in the first and fourth beats, starting in the fourth beat of m. 145 through to m. 150, to Messiaen Mode 3. The left and right hands still move in parallel fifths and in homorhythm, but the introduction of a different scale also creates further intrigue while suspending the listener's expectations. Variation VII was also an experiment to see what level of dissonance can exist over a pedal point. As is evidenced, almost any major or minor triad can occur above the pulsing pedal point found therein.

Although the composition of the Introduction and Variation movements progressed fairly smoothly, the Finale proved to be far more difficult. The initial idea involved differing metres, namely **7** and **8**, with sextuplet flourishes interspersed throughout. This proved unsatisfactory, and I abandoned this approach in favour of a more standard toccata-like passage, although with a recapitulation of mm. 1-23 at the beginning. I composed a full-fledged Finale with this idea, with a duration of nearly two minutes, but was again unsatisfied. The toccata figuration was too constant and unrelenting, quickly becoming uninteresting, and the harmonies likewise becoming pedantic.

I was satisfied with this for a few weeks, but I could not shake the sense that this Finale was too familiar, and that I had not truly explored the extent of both the material's elasticity and my own abilities. On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, I serendipitously heard a recording of Thierry Escaich's aforementioned *Vers L'Espérance*, and I immediately knew I needed to completely rewrite the Finale. Starting anew, I incorporated many changing metres, more dissonant sonorities, more unusual scales, and a driving sense of rhythm throughout. Initially when rewriting the Finale, I intended to avoid recapitulation of any earlier material, but this approach proved to be exhausting, both for the composer and the listener. Instead, I chose to include material from the Introduction, but I completely rearranged the metrical structures employed. I also reordered the material, to continue the suspension of the listener's expectations. I did save and reuse the original draft of the beginning of the Escaich-inspired Finale, in which I composed a section with the entirety of the varied chant melody in the pedals. This was too long at the Finale's outset, and somewhat pedantic, even with the frequently changing metres. I included this passage at the end of the Finale instead, at mm. 308-333, to tie the movement together, while only the first phrase is heard in mm. 195-199. The use of only the first phrase at the outset of the Finale deceives the listener's expectations, while also creating a triumphant



fulfilment upon the entirety of the varied chant melody's appearance at the end.

The ending of the Finale likewise proved to be a challenge. While the originally completed Finale ended with a near verbatim recapitulation as mm. 36-39 from the Introduction, I again rearranged the metrical structures to avoid predictability. The use of the tritone scale in mm. 340-341 was also found in this earlier draft, but the final C major chord appeared at what is now m. 344. This was also too predictable, so I included two iterations of the motivic hexachord which opens the entire work in this measure to give the impression of ending on the wrong chord. The opening gesture, although elongated, is heard in m. 345, which leads to the triumphant arrival of the C major chord to end the work.

Intentional use of registration was the final challenge. Having composed many organ works intended for use in a liturgical setting, I have thus far avoided the inclusion of specified registration. Since this is a concert work, it was necessary to include such registration. I consulted several organist friends for feedback, which gave me different opinions and a range of options for the registration of my composition. These varied opinions gave me a wider range of possibilities for the registration, and ultimately informed the choices I made in this regard.

Composing such a large-scale organ work was a challenge. It forced me to consider structure in a new way, in order to prevent the form and its content sagging in intensity or intrigue. The inclusion of many previously unused sonorities was challenging at first, but I quickly embraced them, and they soon become familiar and comfortable. Balancing these contemporary elements against the more traditional elements of my style was not as difficult as I had always feared. My personal musical language is far more elastic than I realized; this realization, which is nothing short of a breakthrough for my growth as a composer, opens many new possibilities for future compositions.

## 2. Conclusion

*Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* stands as a work which is contemporary while honouring the centuries-old tradition of chant-based organ works. It reflects the repertoire which inspires it, with the music of Leclerc, Ropek, Tournemire, Duruflé, and Escaich playing important roles, while also building on the techniques employed in these and other exemplary works. A unique addition to my own portfolio, especially within my organ catalogue, it makes use of a distinctive form, many personal harmonic, and contrapuntal innovations, and constitutes the most intentional use of registration, register and textural contrast I have yet employed. With a duration of

approximately fifteen minutes, this is also the first extended work I have composed for the organ, and only the second work within my entire catalogue to exceed ten minutes in length.

This composition is also the first occasion in which I use plainchant in one of my works. While I have long loved the Gregorian repertoire, I have struggled to compose with chant melodies. *Introduction, Variations, and Finale on Victimae Paschali Laudes* therefore represents a personal breakthrough within my abilities and within my œuvre, wherein I combine my love of traditional liturgical music with more contemporary techniques. Consisting of nine separate variations, this extended work forces me to rethink how I approach my techniques of varying melodic material, textures, and the overall use of different types of harmony. This breakthrough also represents a personal advancement, for in the past, I have strenuously resisted the alteration of existing chant melodies and hymn tunes out of a personal stubbornness of aesthetics, which previously stifled my creativity. Having crossed an important threshold within my ability as a composer, I intend to continue using plainchant in future compositions in new ways, further uniting my love for traditional forms of liturgical music with more modern compositional practices. The variation genre grew out of organist who in centuries past would extemporize on plainchant to create longer works. By composing a large-scale set of variations on a Gregorian melody, I honour this heritage while furthering my skills as a composer.

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