

PETER RICHARD CONTE  
IN CONCERT AT  
WESTMINSTER UNITED CHURCH  
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA  
SUNDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2010

PROGRAM

- Overture to *'The Yeomen of the Guard'* Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)  
*transcribed by Peter Richard Conte*
- Marche Religieuse Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)
- Concerto in G Major Johann Ernst (1696-1715)  
Allegro *transcribed by Johann Sebastian Bach*  
Grave  
Presto
- Choral No. 1 in E Major César Franck (1822-1890)

TEN MINUTE INTERVAL

- Variations on a Theme of Arcangelo Corelli Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962)  
*transcribed by Peter Richard Conte*
- From *Bach's Memento* Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)  
Pastorale *transcribed by Charles-Marie Widor*  
Mattheus-Final
- Fantasy on Nursery Tunes Robert Elmore (1913-1985)
- Finlandia Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)  
*transcribed by Herbert Austin Fricker*

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ORGAN TRANSCRIPTIONS

Composers from earliest times have delighted in arranging music - - both their own works and those of others -- for performance in ways other than originally intended. The art of the organ transcription reached its height in the mid-nineteenth century, when, in England, town halls were music centers of entertainment in nearly every city. These halls often contained splendid pipe organs, usually occupying a central position in the front of the auditorium. ‘Symphonic’ organs, with their vast number and rich contrasts in tone color, were perfectly suited for transcriptions of orchestral works. The organist, then, became a kind of one-man-band, appearing to do the work of scores of musicians, while employing technical wizardry at the console beneath the massive organ pipes.

Two organists from the nineteenth century, W.T. Best (1826-1897) and Edwin Lemare (1865-1934) were champions in the art of transcription arranging and performing. In a newspaper interview, Lemare shared his vision as a concert organist: “By introducing modern orchestral works in the form of transcriptions for the organ...I hope to get organ programmes out of the old ruts...I do not wonder that organ recitals are unpopular in so many places...in many cases the selections are dry...When I look at programmes I cannot imagine how anyone would wish to hear them.” Organ recitals in the days of Best and Lemare attracted audiences of thousands; when Lemare emigrated to the United States in 1902, he was the highest paid organist in the world.

Orchestral transcriptions are much like translations. They are successful only when the listener forgets that it is a translation; the work sounds as natural as if it were originally written in this ‘new’ language. The transcription artist not only ‘translates’ the composer’s original score, but melds together the inherent character and beauty of the ‘new’ instrument’s resources. You, the audience, are the final judge as to the success of these endeavors!