

FRIDAY MUSIC AT MIDDAY



National City Christian Church

5 THOMAS CIRCLE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

MARK VALENTI

Pianist

October 16, 2020

12:15 p.m.

PROGRAM

Organ Prelude in G minor BWV 535
(1705, arr. Siloti 1924)
Adagio, religioso

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Sonata (1926)
Allegro moderato
Sostenuto e pesante
Allegro molto

Béla Bartók (1885-1945)

Two Pieces
Prelude #8 Bk. II (...Ondine)
L'isle joyeuse (1904)

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

MEET THE ARTIST

Mark Valenti received his Master of Music from Northwestern University, Bachelor of Music from the Philadelphia Musical Academy and has studied with such notable teachers as Benjamin Whitten, Zoltan Kocsis and Mary Sauer. In addition to giving solo recitals in cities throughout the U.S., Mr. Valenti has performed in France, Belgium, Hungary and Luxembourg as well as for former First Lady Barbara Bush in Washington, D.C.

Mark Valenti has performed in recital live on WFMT classical radio. He has also done extensive work in the Jazz field including performances with Gregory Hines, Frank Foster and Al Grey and has appeared on television with Joe Sudler's Swing Machine and singer/actor Christopher Durham.

Formerly Professor of Music at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Xavier University in Chicago and the Loire Valley Music Institute in France, Mr. Valenti currently teaches at his studio in the Lakeview neighborhood of Chicago and is available for lessons for all levels and all styles.

PROGRAM NOTES

Alexander Siloti's arrangement of Theodor Szanto's transcription of J.S. Bach's *Organ Prelude in G minor* is a masterful rendering on piano of the sonorities of a cathedral organ. The composition commences in a solemn mood which then launches into a cadenza-like interlude full of fantastical flourishes. Giving way to mysterious antiphonal call and responses suggesting the different organ manuals and stops, the prelude then culminates in a triumphant annunciation.

Written the same year as *Piano Concerto No. 1* and *Out of Doors Suite* for his concert tours, the *Sonata* by Bela Bartok exploits the potentialities of percussive pianism, primal rhythms and peasant-like melodies. The first movement is a dance with a motor driven rhythm. The static harmonies and inert melodies of the second movement depict a stark, bleak, desolate landscape. The third movement, set in a kind of rondo-variation form, has the most ethnic flavor combining folk-like melodies and rhythms with percussive modernism.

As much as Claude Debussy despised the label of Impressionist, it is hard to deny. *Canope* is Debussy's evocation of the enigmatic ancient Egyptian city of Canope while *L'isle Joyeuse* (The Isle of Joy), one of Debussy's few ostensive ventures into bravura pianism, embarks on an exotic, quixotic adventure replete with musical depictions of wind, surf and sand.

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Since 1981 National City Christian Church has presented midday concerts with a special emphasis on its heroic pipe organ. At most of our midday concerts you will hear the majestic roar of this 7,500-pipe, five-keyboard Möller organ (the city's third largest pipe organ) in 30-minute recitals of some of the most thrilling and audience-friendly music performed by some of the nation's finest organists.

You are encouraged to come see the console following the recital. Please visit the back of the sanctuary as well to investigate, touch, and explore the display of organ pipes, photographs of the inner workings of the organ, and other interesting information on organ history. Discover ways in which the unique art of organ building includes diverse technologies and crafts, such as computers, woodworking, electronics, and physics.

National City Christian Church is the national church of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a house of prayer for all people, and home to an open and affirming community of faith. The congregation dates back to 1843, and the current sanctuary, designed by celebrated architect John Russell Pope, was dedicated in 1930. Pope later planned and built the National Archives and the Jefferson Memorial. NCCC has long been a church of presidents. James A. Garfield and Lyndon B. Johnson were members and actively involved in this congregation. During the 1980-81 renovation of the sanctuary, stained glass windows were installed to memorialize these two great leaders of our country. NCCC is actively involved in social service projects and supports organizations such as Martha's Table and N Street Village. It also distributes 10,000 bags of food each year at its weekly food pantry and is home to a number of non-profit organizations. Please join us for worship on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. Our services are currently being broadcast on the church's YouTube channel and Facebook page. Please visit our [website](#) for a complete listing of our offerings, services, and events.



NATIONAL CITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
5 Thomas Circle, NW, Washington DC 20005
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www.nationalcitycc.org

Rev. Dr. Amy Butler, Interim Senior Minister
Rev. Dr. J. Michael McMahon, Artistic Director

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