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ARRIVING A DAY LATE for the convention, due to a church-playing obligation on Sunday, meant missing some early events, which were reported by others to be most enjoyable. Nonetheless, a profusion of terrific events lay ahead. Upon reaching Prospect Park United Methodist Church in Minneapolis at noon on Monday, Daniel Schwandt demonstrated the church's 1927 Hinners (II+P/13), a pleasant instrument that generously filled the room with smooth yet bright tone—one of those fine little work-horse church organs that knows its job and does it beautifully. Schwandt played a varied program with expression, sensitive to the harmonic tensions in the music. A highlight were two of Rheinberger's *Six Pieces for Violin and Organ*, Op. 150 with violinist Cara Wilson. The duo performed the wistfully melodic "Abendlied" and the energetic "Gigue" to great effect, during which the Hinners shone as an ideal accompanimental instrument. The afternoon continued with a demonstration of a somewhat stringy-sounding 1954 Kilgen (III+P/39) in Holy Cross Lutheran Church. With its fast, deep tremolos

throbbing on all manuals, it assumed a believable theater-organ persona, and organist Greg Zelek played up this aspect of its personality in a spirited, entertainment-oriented program performed from memory.

We then bused to Central Lutheran Church, where John Ferguson showed off the huge 1963 Casavant (IV+P/79). This instrument is so dominated by aggressive high pitches and comparatively modest 8' tone that it causes the "listening at 4' level" effect. At the time the organ was built, this aural impression was enjoyed by many, including this writer, as an exciting new thing, but the charm of this sensation has waned in recent decades. (Perhaps younger ears still find it attractive?) Ferguson's aristocratic, no-nonsense playing of many short pieces in contrasting styles was bookended by fine examples of his signature hymn treatments, no doubt stimulated by the OHS crowd's traditionally robust singing.

The incomparable Nathan Laube, a great favorite at OHS conventions as well as everywhere else these days, was assigned a difficult organ this year. The much amended 1949 Wicks (IV+P/94), in the magnificent Basilica of Saint Mary, is separated from the console by

a substantial distance and speaks into a thick acoustical fog; hence, an organist must labor mightily to hear and control what he is playing. Laube surmounted these challenges with seeming ease to deliver a perfectly performed recital of considerable difficulty. As always, his tempi, rhythms, and phrasing were exemplary, and his virtuosity at manipulating the problematic tonal resources in unorthodox ways to satisfying effect was astonishing. The seven versets of *Salve Regina* by Olivier Latry, played with great expression and imagination, preceded a glorious rendition of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* overture derived from transcription concepts by Samuel P. Warren, Edwin H. Lemare, and Laube himself. Given such stunning performances, it was tempting to believe that this organ stands among the first rank.

Tuesday was spent in the Minnesota River Valley, where we visited four organs in four towns. The surprise organ of the convention for this writer was the 1979 Charles Hendrickson tracker (II+P/30) in the First Lutheran Church of Saint Peter. This instrument stands among the very best of the *Orgelbewegung* instruments, bearing a remarkable resemblance to those famous ones by Marcussen from their golden period of the mid 1940s through the early '70s. Speaking from on high, directly toward the congregation, its relaxed, singing principals (including the mixtures!), lovely liquid flutes, characterful yet roundly pleasing reeds, and suave strings all come together to make various refined ensembles that are commanding and clear yet never too loud or intense. This is an organ that does not tire the ear, yet is not in the least bland. Charles Hendrickson was in the audience for

Jonathan Gregoire's engaging recital, and the applause for the organbuilder was as warm and genuine as it was for the performer. Highlighting the program was August Gottfried Ritter's Sonata No. 3 in A Minor, which Gregoire played with unfailing energy, drive, and expression. Its especially compelling



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