



The Feast of St. Francis Organ Recital

Francis of Assisi was an Italian friar who was born in the latter part of the 12th century. Having founded multiple orders of friars, monks, and nuns, he led a life committed to ministry. Francis was canonized in 1228 by Pope Gregory IX who was largely responsible for the construction of the Basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi, Italy. He would later become the patron saint of Italy as well as the patron saint of animals and nature.

Francis and his followers believed that living in poverty is the only way to effectively minister to others—give your all to others like Christ. Known to have preached even to the birds, Francis respected animals and the forces of nature enough to call them his “brothers” and “sisters.” This evening’s recital is inspired by a text penned by Saint Francis titled, “Canticle of the Sun.” In this excerpt—largely based on Psalm 148—his piety and respect for nature comes through:

“Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord **Brother Sun**, who brings the day; and you give light through him. And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendour! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praised be You, my Lord, through **Sister Moon** and the **stars**, in heaven you formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through **Brother Wind**, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather through which You give sustenance to Your creatures.

Praised be You, my Lord, through **Sister Mother Earth**, who sustains us and governs us and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.”

Penned in 1225 AD, “Canticle of the Sun” is one of Christianity’s oldest and most enduring examples of poetic writing and was the source of inspiration for the hymn *All Creatures of Our God and King*—a paraphrase by hymn-writer William Draper published in 1919. The first chapter of Genesis tells us we have been given charge over creation. Francis’s words should be a reminder of our solemn duty to care for the bountiful gift of our natural world.

Recital Program

24 Pièces de fantaisie, livre II

Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

Hymne au soleil (No. 9)

Clair de lune (No. 11)

Partita on “Creator of the Stars of Night”

David M. Cherwien (b. 1957)

Movements I - V

The Four Winds

Alec Rowley (1892-1958)

North Wind

South Wind

East Wind

West Wind

Le carnaval des animaux

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

IV. Tortues (Tortoises)

Trans. by Ekaterina Melnikova

V. l'Elephant (The Elephant)

VI. Kangourous (Kangaroos)

XIII. Le cygne (The Swan)

Cat Suite

Denis Bédard (b. 1950)

II. Cats at Play

Variations on “Lasst uns erfreuen”

Denis Bédard
