

# Chorale no. 2 for organ Op. posth.

Score (instrumental pitch)

arr. for Wind Quintet by Toby Miller

Franck

**Maestoso** [~ ♩ = 72]

(Bn lead, to fore)

Flute

Clarinet in A

Cor Anglais

Horn in F

Bassoon

*p* *pp* *pp* *mf*

(poco)

16

A (Fl to fore)

Fl.

Cl

CA

Hn

Bn

*p* *pp* *p* *p* *mp*

3 3

29

B

Fl.

Cl

CA

Hn

Bn

*pp* *pp* *p* *pp* *mf*

(poco) (poco)



56 (Cl) (Fl)

Fl. *f*

Cl. *f* *mf*

CA *f*

Hn.

Bn. *f*

61 [pochiss. rall.] **D** [a tempo] (CA)

Fl. *mf* *mp*

Cl. *pp* *ppp*

CA *mf* *pp* *cantabile*

Hn. *mf* *p*

Bn. *mf* *p*

72 **E**

Fl. *pp*

Cl. *pp* *mp* *ppp*

CA *p* *f* *mf* *p*

Hn. *pp* *mf* *mp* *p* *pp*

Bn. *pp* *mf* *p*

82

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn.

Bn.

*pp*

*ppp*

86

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn.

Bn.

(Cl to fore) **F**

*ppp*

*pp*

*f*

*p*

*ppp*

*pp*

*pp*

*p*

92

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn.

Bn.

*mp*

*mf*

*p*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*pp*

*pp*

*mp*

*p*

103

G

Fl. *pp*

Cl. *mf* *p* *pp* *ppp*

CA *p* *pp*

Hn *mp* *pp*

Bn *mf* *p*

108

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn

112

Rall. -----

H [cantabile sostenuto ~ ] = 56  
vibrato [organ 'Vox Humana' + 'Tremulant' stops]  
(Fl)

Fl. *ppp* *pp*

Cl. *ppp* *pp*

CA *pp*

Hn *pp* *pp*

Bn *pp* *pp*

118 (Cl) (Fl) **I** **Largamente con fantasia** [recitative] Fl lead

Fl. *pp* *pp* *ff*

Cl *pp* *ff*

CA *pp* *pp* *ppp* *ff*

Hn *pp* *ppp* *ff*

Bn *pp* *pp* *ff*

128 (CA lead, colla parte)

Fl. *pp*

Cl *f* *pp*

CA *f* *mp*

Hn *pp*

Bn *f* *pp*

134 **GP** (Fl)

Fl. *mp* *pp* *ff*

Cl *mp* *pp* *ff*

CA *f* *mp* *ff*

Hn *mp* *pp* *ff*

Bn *mp* *pp* *ff*

*Non troppo dolce*

(CA) **J**

139

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn.

Bn.

*p* *pp* *mp* *p* *mp* *pp*

rall. rall. ----- **K** Tempo 1 ma un poco meno lento  
(Hn to fore)

144

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn.

Bn.

*sf* *sf* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *pp* *f* *mp* *pp* *p* *mf* *mp* *p*

**L** (Fl to fore)

153

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn.

Bn.

*mp* *mf* *p* *mf* *mf*

160 M (Hn to fore)

Fl. *p*

Cl. *p*

CA *p*

Hn *mp*

Bn *p*

166 (canon with Cl) (canon with Fl)

Fl. *p*

Cl. *mf* *p*

CA *mf* *p*

Hn *mf* *pp*

Bn *mf* *p*

172

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn



179 N (Hn to fore)

Fl. *p*

Cl.

CA *p*

Hn

Bn *f* *p*

185 (Fl to fore) O

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn

191 P (CA & Hn to fore)

Fl. *mf* *p*

Cl. *mf* *pp* *mf cantabile*

CA *mf* *mf cantabile*

Hn *mp* *mf* *mf*

Bn *p*

Fl. *ppp*

Cl *ppp* *pp*

CA *p* *pp* *p*

Hn *p* *pp*

Bn *pp* *ppp*

Fl. *pp* *mp* *ppp*

Cl *mf* *p*

CA *f* *mf* *p*

Hn *mp* *mf* *p*

Bn *mf* *p*

21 **Q** (Fl & Bn to fore)  
*cantabile*

Fl. *mp* *p* *pp*

Cl *pp*

CA *ppp*

Hn *p* *pp*

Bn *mp* *p*

219

Fl. *p* *mf* *sempre cresc.*

Cl. *ppp* *p* *mp*

CA *p* *mp* *mf*

Hn *mp* *mf*

Bn *pp* *mp* *mf*

**R**

Fl. (solo) (w Hn)

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn

231

**S**

Fl. *f*

Cl. *f*

CA *f*

Hn *f*

Bn *f*

235

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn

239

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn

*diminuendo*

*mf*

*mp*

243

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn

**T**

*poco marcato*

*p*

*mp*

*pp*

*pp (legato)*

247

Fl. *legato*

Cl.

CA

Hn.

Bn. *poco marcato*

250

Fl. *legato*

Cl. *poco marcato* *crescendo* *p*

CA *simile (poco marcato)* *p*

Hn.

Bn. *legato* *mp*

253

Fl. *mp* *sempre crescendo* *f*

Cl. *mp* *mp* *mf*

CA *mf*

Hn.

Bn. *mf*

256

[poco rit.] rit **U** [Tempo 1] (Fl Bn to fore)

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn

*f* *ff* (w CA) *ff* (w Cl) *f* (w Fl) *f* *ff* *f*

261

**V** (Bn to fore)

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn

*meno f* *meno f* *meno f* *meno f* *ff*

268

*molto dim. e rall.* *rall.* *colla parte* (lead as marked) *al fine* (Bn)

Fl.

Cl.

CA

Hn

Bn

*mf* *mp* *p* *pp* *f* *mp* *p* *pp* *f* *mf* *mf* *mp* *p* *ff* *f* *mf* *p*

274 **W** [cantabile sostenuto]  
vibrato

Fl. (Fl) (Cl)

Cl

CA

Hn

Bn

*ppp* *pp* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

283 Rall. (Fl) (Hn) (Bn)

Fl.

Cl

CA

Hn

Bn

*pp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp* *pp* *pp*

On 8th November 1890 César Franck died aged 68, a viral infection having turned to pleurisy. He had been ill since July, after suffering a head injury in a collision of horse-drawn vehicles on a Paris street. By his bed were the manuscripts of three Chorales, to which he was putting the finishing touches of the organ registrations. This partly explains why these pieces are considered a musical testament, but there is something in the music itself: if you are reading this as a non-organist like me, familiar previously only with Franck's output for piano and for orchestral instruments, listen before playing, if you can. There is an excellent performance by Jürg Lietha of Chorale no 2 (the least showy but considered the hardest of the three) on Youtube.

Franck's was a life of constant hard work (a standard working day during term was from 6am to 10pm, of which only a couple of hours was for his own composition). His first and biggest battle was to live up to his father's expectations. Nicolas-Joseph was a bank clerk in Liège, whose ambitions were expressed through his children right from birth: he saddled his eldest son with the name César-Auguste-Jean-Guillaume-Hubert. A name more inappropriate for this meek child is hard to imagine: Liszt, who made strenuous efforts on Franck's behalf, later wrote in a letter of introduction "he has the problem of being called César-Auguste, and besides, seems not to me to possess that fortunate social sense that opens all doors". I hazard a guess that, if born to-day, César would have been diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome.

Once father found that sons did have musical talent, exploiting it for financial reward became his life-long focus (think Leopold Mozart, only far worse). In 1834, aged 11, César played before the first King of the new Belgian nation (also Leopold). The family moved to Paris and took French nationality so that César could enter the Conservatoire, then moved back again in 1842 before he completed the course, possibly because study was reducing the time he could devote to concerts and teaching. Two years later this was not producing the desired results and they were back in Paris, where his father attempted to prevent him spending time with a pupil, his future wife, by emotional blackmail ('his mother would be the one to suffer' from loss of income). As soon as he was 25 and able to marry without parental consent, César left home with a note vowing to pay off every penny of his father's 11,000-franc debt.

Three successive church organist posts helped César both pay his way and avoid the limelight. Organ-playing was in an astonishing Dark Age in France. Baroque music was rarely heard, instruments and playing technique so poor that pedals were mostly unused or not available, their use even forgotten (re-demonstrated by a German organist at a Paris concert in 1844). Despite never fully mastering pedal skills himself (he bought a Pleyel pedal-board for home practice), Franck gradually became, with his friend the great organ-builder Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, founder of a new school of French organ-playing – including the art of improvisation, long dormant in France, where his powers astonished his contemporaries and drew many listeners.

1872 was a turning point in his life. Thanks to whom, nobody was sure either then or now, Franck was appointed organ professor at the Conservatoire. Here, despite his unsystematic teaching, his virtuosity, passion for his subject and his sincerity attracted a growing number of pupil fans, who became known as 'la bande à Franck': d'Indy (their leader), Chausson, Duparc, Vierne and others. This, and Franck's habit of teaching composition in his organ classes, aroused other professors' jealousy.

Franck heard Wagner's 'Tristan' Prelude for the first time in 1874; chromaticism and constant modulation became hallmarks of his own style. Franck also now seems for the first time to have found something personal to compose about: a real passion, apparently quite at odds with his serene and almost childlike character, suddenly emerges in his Piano Quintet. After its première in 1879, pianist and dedicatee Saint-Saëns walked out in protest at the music's naked emotion: Franck may have had his Irish pupil Augusta Holmes (who was apparently lusted after by 'everybody' at the Conservatoire) in mind. Franck's wife was also outraged. There is no evidence of any transgressions of his firm Catholic faith, but "much of Franck's behaviour, his lengthy work day, his working holidays, his unconscious use of sensual harmonies and consciously amatory creations like *Psyché*, speak of a man whose marriage was not fulfilling." (Chris Dench, reviewing the excellent recent biography by R J Stove). If Franck was on the autistic spectrum, perhaps he simply didn't really grow up emotionally until his fifties. That may also help explain his failure to understand the politics at the Conservatoire, and his ability to ignore the general critical and public hostility to his music.

Franck's interest in the Baroque, and skill in fugal and canonic writing, go back to his first teacher in Paris, Anton Reicha: former pupil in Vienna of organist and counterpoint expert Albrechtsberger, and also a rebel at the Conservatoire. Franck's dated exercises survive with Reicha's corrections (+ cryptic annotations perhaps by Erik Satie), showing how hard Reicha worked his 12-year-old pupil. Franck later expected no less.

The three Chorales share an overt homage to Bach, as Liszt saw in earlier organ works. No 1 is perhaps closest to a Chorale, with a towering climax; no 3 is a Toccata with virtuoso and recitative passages. No 2 is a Passacaglia with interlude, or theme and variations; a ground bass of 16 (rather than 8 or 4) bars allows a long expressive melody to be overlaid. Equally the two large sections could be thought of as exposition/development + recapitulation/fugue, each closed by a *pp* coda of great harmonic beauty played with *Vox Humana* stop.