

## **PROGRAM NOTES: "Ceremonies"**

"Ceremonies" is a collection of works (and a collection of movements) for organ and brass. 4 of the movements involve some configuration of brass and organ, and 3 movements are for solo organ. Any of the movements can be performed separately, or combined in any grouping of instrumentation or order, according to need. The title refers to the various ways in which we celebrate the many aspects of life through religious and secular ceremonies...from solemn and contemplative to joyous and dancing.

The first and last movements ("Opening Ceremony" and "Ceremony", respectively) involve a full brass quintet in duo with the organ. The third movement, "Fanfare", is for solo horn and organ, and plays upon the horn's variations of color. The fifth movement, "Processional", for 2 solo trumpets and organ, is lyrical and contemplative, as if for a solemn occasion. The remainder of the movements, "Meditation", "Prayer Song", and "Celebration" (mvts. 2, 4, and 6) are for solo organ, and present a variety of tempos and moods in order to facilitate creating a whole work (of 12 minutes duration) for organ alone, should a player decide to perform just these movements.

"Ceremonies" was commissioned in 2001 by the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, in honor of their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

--Jennifer Higdon