

Hugo Distler: Composer for the Church

Join Larry Palmer, Kristina Langlois, Mary Kay Geston, Gary Simpson and Paul Westermeyer to celebrate of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Hugo Distler (b.1908).

Clinicians will discuss Distler's life, perform some of his music, and consider how it might be used in a congregational setting. A workshop on Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who lived at the same time as Distler, will discuss the German political context of the period and contrast Bonhoeffer's theological response with Distler's.

Evening Prayer

The conference will conclude with a service of Evening Prayer, which will include Distler's "Totentanz" (Dance of Death). This work, written in 1934, was stimulated by the medieval Dance of Death Chapel at St. Mary's Church in Luebeck and by Angelus Silesius' *Aphorisms* which Distler knew through Leonard Lechner's settings.

The service begins at 3:30pm in the Chapel of the Incarnation, Luther Seminary, and is free and open to the public.

Event Schedule

8:00 a.m. Registration

8:30-9:00 a.m. *Morning Prayer*

9:30-10:45 a.m. Plenary I

Hugo Distler: Man and Music, Life and Times, Larry Palmer
(There will be a brief 15 minute time for discussion at the conclusion of the plenary.)

10:45-11:00 a.m. Break

11:00a.m.– 11:50 p.m. Workshops

Select one of the following:

- *Distler's Organ Music for Church and Home*, Larry Palmer
- *Singing and Playing Distler for the small congregation*, Kristina Langlois and Mary Kay Geston
- *Hugo Distler's Germany and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Confessing Church Response*, Gary Simpson

12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch

Lunch is included in the cost of the conference.

1:00-1:50 p.m. Workshops

Select one of the following:

- *Distler's Organ Music for Church and Home*, Larry Palmer
- *Singing and Playing Distler for the small congregation*, Kristina Langlois and Mary Kay Geston
- *Hugo Distler's Germany and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Confessing Church Response*, Gary Simpson

2:00-3:00 p.m. Plenary II

A brief introduction to Distler's "Totentanz", followed by a panel discussion of Distler's musical interpretation, responses to Nazism by Distler and Bonhoeffer, and political use of music for or against the state.

3:00-3:30 p.m. Break

Use this time to shop in the Luther Seminary bookstore

3:30p.m. *Evening Prayer*



Luther Seminary—Distler Conference
c/o Master of Sacred Music Office
2481 Como Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55108



Hugo Distler: Composer for the Church

A Conference of Lectures,
Workshops and Evening Prayer

including a performance
of Distler's
"Totentanz" (*Dance of Death*)

March 1, 2008

For more information on the Distler Music Conference log on to www.luthersem.edu/distler

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 794
St. Paul, Minn.

LUTHER SEMINARY



Conference Events

Plenary Sessions

Plenary I: “Hugo Distler: Man and Music, Life and Times”, Larry Palmer

Plenary II: A brief introduction to Distler’s “Totentanz”, followed by a panel discussion of Distler’s musical interpretation, responses to Nazism by Distler and Bonhoeffer, and political use of music for or against the state.

Workshops

Offered concurrently throughout the day.

**“Distler: Organ Music for Church and Home”
Larry Palmer**

An evaluation of influences, inspirations and instruments, with special emphasis on the Short Choral Preludes and the 30 Spielstuecke, and including a brief, rare bit from Distler’s organ performances.

**“Hugo Distler’s Germany and Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s Confessing Church Response”
Gary Simpson**

Hugo Distler had a contemporary in Lutheran Pastor and Theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who struggled to offer a Christian response to the great moral atrocity of the times. This workshop will address the social and political context that confronted these Christians.

“Singing and Playing Distler’s music in a small congregational setting”

Kristina Langlois and Mary Kay Geston

Hugo Distler’s music has particular relevance for churches with small choral and instrumental forces. In this workshop, singing and playing techniques for Distler’s music will be described, and demonstrations of his organ and choral music for small forces will be presented. Suggestions for teaching Distler’s choral music to amateur singers will also be offered

Plenary Speakers and Clinicians



Mary Kay Geston is a member of the music faculty at Northwestern College, St. Paul, Minn, where she directs choirs and teaches music education courses. She holds a DMA in Choral Conducting and Literature from the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Mary Kay received her Master of Music in Choral Conducting from the University of Minnesota, where her thesis project examined the choral music of Hugo Distler. She has worked extensively with church, school and community choirs and is an active clinician and guest conductor.



Kristina Langlois is organist and Director of Music and Worship at Westwood Lutheran Church, Minneapolis. An active church musician, recitalist and teacher in the Twin Cities, she received her Doctor of Music degree in Church Music from Northwestern University, where her dissertation

and a lecture recital focused on the music of Hugo Distler. In 1985, Kris traveled to Germany to interview Distler’s colleague and friend, Bruno Grusnick. Langlois has also translated Ursula Hermann’s extensive biography of Distler, *Hugo Distler: Herald and Admonisher*, from German to English.



Larry Palmer is Professor of Organ and Harpsichord at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas where he also serves as University Organist. A former harpsichord editor of *The Diapason*, Palmer has conducted opera, church and university choral ensembles, and has performed organ

and harpsichord concerts throughout the United States and several European countries. In addition to his many recordings, his publications include books on Hugo Distler and the 20th century harpsichord revival.



Gary Simpson is Professor of Systematic Theology at Luther Seminary and a member of both the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Christian Ethics. At one time he chaired the Jewish-Christian Association of Oregon, and was vice president of the Oregon Holocaust Resource Center. Gary’s essays on theology and public life

have appeared in both English and German language collections. *War, Peace, and God: Rethinking the Just War Tradition*; and *Critical Social Theory: Prophetic Reasoning, Civil Society and Christian Imagination* are two of his many publications.

REGISTRATION FORM

Distler Conference — March 1

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Registration Fees

Individual registration (non-student) \$65 \$ _____

Additional individuals attending from same parish/congregation, \$55/each \$ _____

Student Registration \$45 \$ _____

School attending _____

Lunch (included in registration fee)

TOTAL \$ _____

Pre-registration deadline is Friday, February 22.

- Registration after February 22 is \$80, \$55 and \$70 respectively.
- Registration at the door is not guaranteed.
- Checks should be made payable to Luther Seminary.
- Payment is non-refundable.

Tear off registration form and mail with payment to:

Luther Seminary, MSM Office
2481 Como Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108

Or, download form at www.luthersem.edu/distler and mail with payment.

Questions? Call the MSM office at **651-523-1612** or e-mail krongsta@luthersem.edu.

Campus Map

