

2023 MTNA National Conference (Reno, NV)

Sunday, March 26

Condensed lecture* on research of Frank Martin and his *Huit préludes pour le piano* (1948)

presented by Lim Angela Tchoi

Swiss musician Frank Martin (1890-1974) composed in many genres, from theatrical and symphonic works to vocal, chamber, and solo works. *Huit préludes pour le piano*, his best-known piece for solo piano, encompasses a wide range of pianistic techniques, colors, and atmospheres to challenge the mature pianist.

Featured elements in the *Huit préludes* include the use of the B-A-C-H motive and its alterations, chromatic yet triadic writing, gliding tonality, baroque elements, dodecaphony, stratification, extreme range and registral shifts, octave doublings and displacements, percussive rhythmic drive, large-scale *crescendi*, and hidden cyclicism. Influences of music from past eras are also evident in the *Huit préludes* through various compositional techniques and practices such as contrapuntal lines, chant-like declamatory melodies, imitation, toccata, and pedal-points.

This set of preludes represents Martin's unique sound and style and identifies as a consolidation of his mature compositional techniques as similar elements are found in his works of other genres.

For more information on the composer, please visit frankmartin.org.

In 2024, the *Frank Martin Stichting* in the Netherlands will celebrate 50 years since his passing.

(This lecture-recital is flexible in duration, about 60–90 minutes. Please contact LAchoi@alumni.usc.edu to arrange future engagements.)

Compositional Element	Preludes which contain the elements
B-A-C-H motive (and its alterations)	I, II, III, IV, V, VII, VIII
Triadic writing	I, II, IV, VIII
Gliding tonality	I, II, III, IV, V, VII, VIII
Baroque elements (pedal points, canon, and melismatic writing, rhythmic counterpoint)	I, II, III, V, VI, VII
Dodecaphony	I, VI
Stratification	I, II, IV, V, VII
Extreme range and registral shifts	
Octave doublings	I, II, III, IV, V, VII, VIII
Percussive rhythmic drive	IV, V, VIII
Large-scale crescendo (registral, dynamic or rhythmic)	I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII
Hidden cyclicism	I and IV III and V VI and VIII

