

# ORGAN GIANTS

J.S. BACH • MENDELSSOHN • SCHUMANN • BRAHMS • B-A-C-H

William Fox

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2021, 4.30 pm

 St PAUL'S  
CATHEDRAL

## Complete Organ Works of J. S. Bach (1685 – 1750)

*Recital XVIII: works for Advent*

### **Prelude in F minor**

BWV 534i

Modern scholarship has doubted the authenticity of this piece as the sole surviving manuscript is in the hand of Bach's pupil Kittel and dates from after Bach's death. If genuine, the piece would likely emanate from the composer's youth in Weimar, where he wrote a plethora of free works.

### **Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme**

645

The Schübler Chorales (BWV 645 – 650) comprise six movements transcribed from various cantatas. It is plausible that, as the cantatas were not published, these transcriptions were an adventurous method of dispersing musical material which Bach valued highly. The buoyant BWV 645 is taken from the cantata of the same name (BWV 140), set to the text "Zion hears the watchmen singing".

### **Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten**

647

BWV 647 originated as a central duet in *Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten* BWV 93. This setting presents the chorale melody as a pedal cantus firmus while the original vocal lines are recast as a lyrical accompaniment.

### **Gottes-Sohn ist kommen**

703

is a *manualiter* fughetta in three voices.

### **Kommst du nun, Jesu, von Himmel herunter**

650

BWV 649 was originally a soprano aria in the cantata *Bleib bei uns* BWV 6.

### **Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland**

599

Bach commences the *Orgelbüchlein*, his compendium of organ music for the liturgical year, with a tranquil evocation of Advent anticipation.

### **Wo soll ich fliehen hin**

646

The text "Where shall I flee, troubled as I am by so many sins?" is characterised vividly in BWV 646 by semiquaver figurations running in despair.

### **Fughetta super: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland**

699

BWV 699 sets the first line of the chorale as a delicate and refined three-voice fughetta.



## Ach, bleib bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ

649

BWV 650 was originally an alto aria in the joyful *Lobe den Herren* BWV 137.

## Fugue in F minor

534ii

shares characteristics with the *Prelude and Fugue in C-sharp minor* BWV 849, thought to be written at a similar time. An imposing *alla breve* fugue in five voices is interspersed with lighter *manualiter* episodes. The harshness of the subject is defined by a gaping interval of a falling diminished seventh, which subsequently contributes to the bitter harmonies evident throughout.

Notes by Samuel Bristow

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## William Fox

William Fox is currently the Acting Organist and Assistant Director of Music at St Paul's Cathedral, having been Sub-Organist since July 2018. He works with the world-famous choir of St Paul's, accompanying and directing the music at services, including services of national significance. He also works as part of the ambitious music outreach programme at the Cathedral and gives recitals throughout the UK and abroad. Since September 2019, William has additionally been a junior fellow at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. William was a chorister at York Minster, before holding organ scholarships at Wells and Hereford Cathedrals. Prior to his appointment at St Paul's, he was organ scholar and an academic scholar at Magdalen College, Oxford, from where he graduated with a first class degree in Music. William became a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists as a teenager, winning the Turpin and Durrant prize. He has appeared on BBC radio, BBC television, and Classic FM, and worked through much of Europe and in the USA. His debut recording, of the organ works of Cecilia McDowall, was released in 2021, gaining 5 \* reviews in *Choir and Organ* and *The Organ*. As a piano accompanist, he is the winner of the 2018 Sir Anthony Lewis Memorial Prize Competition.

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## Next recital

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 5.00 pm**

Peter Stevens | Organ Meditation | *La Nativité du Seigneur* by Messiaen

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Members of the audience are kindly requested to switch off all electronic devices, and are reminded that photography and recording are not permitted.

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