

ORGAN GIANTS

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

William Fox

Sunday 24th January 2021, 4.30 pm

Live-stream only



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

Recital II

Prelude in E minor

BWV 548a

While most of Bach's free works emanate from his youth in Weimar, BWV 548 is a rare example of the mature composer revisiting the form while Cappelmeister in Leipzig. The emotional weight of the Prelude is matched by its scale; it laboriously trudges in a strict ritornello form.

Nun freut euch, lieben Christen

755

The text of this early Lutheran hymn rejoices in God's salvation. The first phrase of the melody is used as the base for this fughetta.

Nun freut euch, lieben Christen

734

A buoyant soprano line is accompanied by an athletic bass line in this sprightly and celebratory prelude, with the chorale melody appearing in the pedals.

Trio in D minor

583

The origins of this work are uncertain, as the only surviving sources date from after Bach's death. Even its purpose is debated; in different manuscripts its titles vary from trio to chorale prelude, as the opening phrase perfectly resembles the chorale *Hier lieg ich nun, mein Gott*. These known unknowns aside, it is as artfully crafted a piece as any movement of Bach's Trio Sonatas.

In dich hab' ich gehoffet, Herr

712

This delightful fughetta, a paraphrase of Psalm 31, is founded on a joyful, dance-like motif. The chorale melody appears as a soprano cantus firmus above the contrapuntal texture.

Gott, durch deine Güte

724

This Christmas chorale shares its melody with the Advent chorale 'Gottes sohn ist kommen', to which this prelude has also been assigned by some performers. Opening with the hymn's opening phrase in imitation, this free contrapuntal movement features the unadorned melody in the soprano line.



Jesu der du meine Seele

752

Here the chorale appears in canon, accompanied by a walking bassline.

Fugue in E minor

548b

The fugue's characteristic subject literally expands, starting at the interval of a third and growing outwards to an octave – earning the 'Wedge' nickname. Following the austere prelude, the fugue is unconfined and unpredictable. Within a loosely-bound fugal structure are interwoven extraordinary soloistic flourishes, akin to the nimble scalic passagework of a Vivaldi violin concerto.

Notes by Samuel Bristow

William Fox

William Fox has been the Sub-Organist of St Paul's Cathedral, London, 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. As a piano accompanist, he is the winner of the 2018 Sir Anthony Lewis Memorial Prize Competition.

Next recital | Live-stream only

Sunday 31st January at 4.30 pm

William Fox | Complete Organ Works of J. S. Bach Recital III

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