

# ORGAN GIANTS

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

William Fox

Easter Day, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2021, 4.30 pm  
Live-stream only



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

Recital VII

### Prelude and Fugue in D

532

The opening of this early masterwork is founded on rising pedal scales – a joyous outburst. The second *alla breve* section of the Prelude is more restrained but the refined contrapuntal writing lends it grandeur. A dramatic recitative follows, rich in harmonic colour and rhetorical flourishes. The fugue's extensive subject is energetic, and a movement of great virtuosity is built on it.

### Christ lag in Todesbanden

718

The chorale is a Lutheran revision of the Easter plainchant *Victimae Paschali Laudes*. This fantasia, opening as a two-part invention based on the hymn's melodic material, sees a third voice enter the texture with a rendition of the hymn.

### Christ lag in Todesbanden

625

### Jesus Christus, unser Heiland

626

### Erstanden ist der heil'ge Christ

628

### Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag

629

These four serious Easter preludes are drawn from the *Orgelbüchlein*. In BWV 625, the chorale is harmonised in a flowing four part texture. The syncopated rhythmic figurations in BWV 626 could display Christ literally leaping from the tomb. The fleeting BWV 628 is founded on a rising figuration; perhaps another allusion to Christ's rising from the dead. BWV 629 treats the hymn as a canon; a possible representation of the chorale's text '[Christ] leads his captive enemies' after his triumph over death: one hand leads while the feet follow.

### Jesus Christus, unser Heiland

666

This chorale is the Lutheran reworking of the Latin Easter hymn *Jesus Christus nostra salus*. The text is a summation of the Eucharistic experience; from Christ's suffering on the cross to the invitation for



humanity to join at Christ's table, to redemption through Christ's love. This setting emanates from the 'Great Eighteen', a series of mature chorale preludes from Bach's Leipzig period.

### **Christ ist erstanden**

627

This substantial *Orgelbüchlein* prelude is split into three sections, one for each of the chorale's verses. Much like BWV 625, the unadorned melody is accompanied contrapuntally. The final stanza is founded on a rising figure, concluding this work with jubilant grandeur.

*Notes by Samuel Bristow*

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## **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.

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## **Next recital**

**Sunday 11 April at 4.30 pm**

Samuel Bristow | Complete Organ Works of Mendelssohn Recital IV

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