



ORGAN GIANTS

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

William Fox

Sunday 10th January 2021, 4.30 pm

Live-stream only



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

Recital I: works for Christmas, New Year, Epiphany, Baptism of Christ

Prelude and Fugue in C

BWV 545

is most likely an early work from his time in Mühlhausen. Well-crafted and assured, the piece is an apt demonstration of the youthful Bach's confidence.

Wir Christenleut

710

is a miniature trio in which the chorale melody appears in the pedals, the joy of Christmas displayed by ornamentation in the upper two voices.

Fughetta: Christum wir sollen loben schon

696

makes use of a heavily ornamented version of the first line of the chorale as its subject.

Helft mir Gottes Güte preisen

613

reflects at the passing of the old year but looks with confidence towards the new.

Das alte Jahr vergangen ist

614

demonstrates Bach's incorporation of numerology; the piece contains twelve bars and three hundred and sixty-five notes; lamenting the months and days of the "year which has now past".

In dir ist Freude

615

is a virtuosic herald to the New Year.

Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin

616

Herr Gott, nun schließ den Himmel auf

617

Both of these works are paraphrases of the Nunc Dimittis. The sprightly rhythmic motif of the first piece captures the joy of witnessing the Saviour. In BWV 617 the texture accompanying the chorale is restless, while the pedal line persistently knocks at Heaven's gates.

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern

763

treats this Epiphany hymn as a delicate canon between two voices with pedal accompaniment.

Christ, unser Herr zum Jordan kam 684

Christ, unser Herr zum Jordan kam 685

Both pieces are from *Clavier-Übung III*, published during Bach's Leipzig period. BWV 684 displays the joy of new life through baptism through a rippling semiquaver accompaniment, while BWV 685 treats the first phrase of the hymn as a fughetta.

'Jig' Fugue in G 577

dates from 1720 and most likely takes its inspiration from a work by Bach's idol, Dietrich Buxtehude, of the same name.

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 17th January at 4.30 pm

Samuel Bristow | Complete Organ Works of Mendelssohn Recital I

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