



ORGAN GIANTS

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

William Fox

Sunday 23 May 2021, 4.30 pm

Live-stream only

 **St PAUL'S**
CATHEDRAL

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

Recital X: works for Pentecost

Fantasia super: Komm, Heiliger Geist, Herre Gott

BWV 651

The arpeggiated figurations in this energetic prelude depict the gushing winds of the Holy Spirit as it descends upon the disciples, the chorale present as an authoritative pedal cantus firmus.

Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist

631

is Luther's revision of the Latin plainsong hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*. In this prelude, characterised by its rhythmic motifs, the pedal notes are placed on the third of each figure, perhaps in order to represent the Holy Spirit.

Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend

726

This harmonisation may demonstrate why Bach was unpopular as an organist in his youth, as it is an accurate depiction of the florid and elaborate hymn accompaniments he would offer in church on Sundays.

Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend

709

is a delicate and lyrical prelude, in which the ornamented chorale melody is accompanied by three lower voices.

Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend

632

This *Orgelbüchlein* prelude is founded on the opening triad found in the chorale melody – the figuration is used repeatedly within the accompanying parts, always one after the other, perhaps to signify the text 'lead us in the way of truth'.

Trio super: Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend

655

The motif of this exquisitely crafted trio utilises the chorale melody's opening phrase, before receiving a complete rendition in the pedal line as the piece nears its conclusion.

Komm Heiliger Geist, Herre Gott

652

In the longest of Bach's chorale preludes, an embellished chorale melody sings above a gentle three-part sarabande, before a semiquaver texture concludes the work with cries of 'Hallelujah'.

Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist 667

Emanating from the Leipzig 'Great Eighteen' collection, this prelude is an extended adaptation of BWV 631, which was played earlier in the programme. The piece builds in intensity through an increasingly complex semiquaver texture, the pedal line this time reciting the chorale. Within this fiery atmosphere, Bach adds his signature by subtly incorporating the B-A-C-H theme in the riveting closing bars.

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. His debut recording, of the organ works of Cecilia McDowall, was released in 2021, gaining a 5 * review in *Choir and Organ*. As a piano accompanist, he is the winner of the 2018 Sir Anthony Lewis Memorial Prize Competition.

Next recital | Live-stream only

Sunday 30 May at 4.30 pm

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

Sunday Organ Recitals rely on the generous support of our audiences. The musical heritage of St Paul's has come under severe pressure as a result of COVID-19. We recommend a donation of £5, and thank you in advance for your contribution. Please include

'Sunday Organ Recitals' in the comment box in the link below:

<https://www.stpauls.co.uk/support/st-pauls/donate-to-us>