

('Ecstasies of Joy') did not exist; Messiaen conceived this uplifting toccata specially for his organ transcription of the suite.

Méditations sur le Mystère de la Sainte Trinité ('Meditations on the Mystery of the Holy Trinity') was premièred by Massiaen himself in the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C. in 1972. There are nine movements and the sixth, *Dans le Verbe était la Vie* ('In the Word was Life'), unaccompanied plainsong on a single stop, is heard against colourful chords which appear to oppose the bareness.

Messe de la Pentecôte ('Pentecost Mass') dates from 1950 and shares with the suites of *L'Orgue Mystique* by Messiaen's senior contemporary, Charles Tournemire, a five-movement plan. Hindu rhythms and birdsong here provide the principal thematic elements. The movement played tonight, *Les Oiseaux et les Sources*, ('Birds and Springs'), was inspired by a text from The Song of the Three Holy Children: 'O ye fountains, bless ye the Lord; O all ye fowls of the air, bless ye the Lord'. The calls of the cuckoo, nightingale and blackbird are incorporated, as well as the trickle of water drops, depicted by staccato textures.

Salut à Olivier Messiaen ends with two movements from *La Nativité* ('The Birth of the Saviour'). At the time of its composition (1935), Messiaen thought of himself as *compositeur de musique et rythmicien*. The rhythmic intricacies of *La Nativité* amply illustrate this assertion.

Les Anges ('The Angels'), the sixth movement, is based on a passage from St Luke's Gospel: 'A multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest"'. The angels descend and ascend, lightly flitting and flapping wings. The piece is based on rhythms immediately preceded or followed by their augmentation and increased by the value of a dot. *Dieu parmi nous* ('God among us') presents three themes, introduced at the outset; each is a symbol; the first is Christ's descent from heaven to earth; the second is the gentle expression of spiritual union with Christ and the third is the soul's exultation. A full exposition of these elements leads to a redoubtable and vigorous toccata - a thrilling conclusion to tonight's *Hommage*.



THURSDAY 14 JULY Oundle School Chapel at 9.00 pm

ALBERT RICHENHAGEN Organ

Sponsored by *Botschaft der Bundesrepublik, Germany*



Albert Richenhagen was born in Cologne and is now a Professor at the *Hochschule für Musik* there, where he also studied. He is a brilliant improviser with an interest in jazz. He has toured in many countries and is particularly recognised in Sao Paulo (Brazil), Budapest and Rome. This is his second British visit as an organist.

Programme

Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654)

O lux beata Trinitas (7 Variations on a Gregorian tune)

Hermann Schroeder (1904-1984)

O Heiligste Dreifaltigkeit (Choralfantasie für Orgel)

Wolfgang Stockmeier (born 1931)

Variationen für Orgel über ein Thema von Johann Kuhnau

Theo Brandmüller (born 1948)

Innenlicht Fantasy on the Gregorian tune *Lumen Christi*

Improvisations on themes given by the audience

Albert Richenhagen's predominantly modern programme has one feature akin to Jesper Madsen's on Monday: it opens with one, apparently isolated, early work. Yet Scheidt's '*O Lux beata Trinitas*' accords precisely with this recital's main themes - Gregorian chant and the spirit of variation.

SCHEIDT was about twenty when he travelled to Amsterdam for study with Sweelinck - 'The Maker of Organists' - from whom he learned important skills. Scheidt's best-known work is *Tablatura Nova*, a three-volume collection of keyboard pieces. Tonight's work comes from volume 3 and demonstrates the composer's direct and attractive idiom.

SCHROEDER has common ancestry with Beethoven on his mother's side! He studied at the Cologne *Musikhochschule* and proceeded to the posts of Cathedral organist at Trier and Director of Trier's *Musikhochschule*. His most important works have been for the Catholic church, whose music he has done much to reform. His characteristic style blends skilfully elements of mediaeval music with twentieth century polyphony.

Music in a thorough-going contemporary German idiom ends the recital: virtuoso pieces, based on earlier material, by STOCKMEIER and BRANDMÜLLER, followed by Improvisations from Albert Richenhagen!



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