

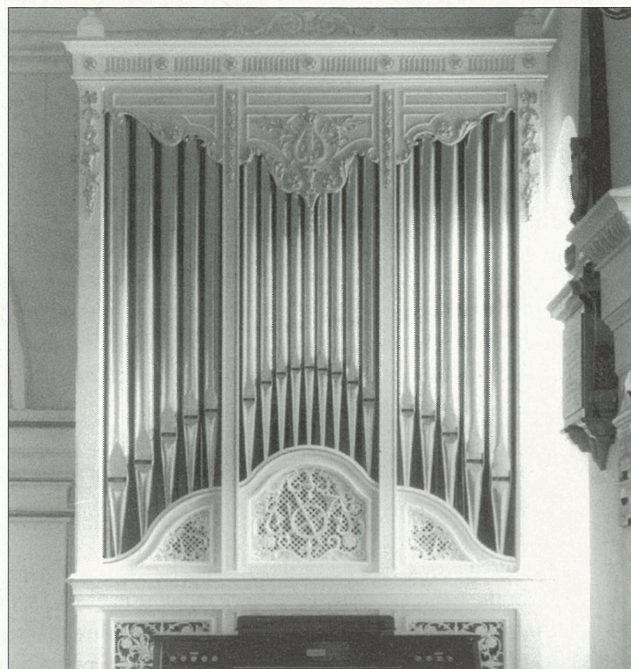
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Organists' Review

We assume, as you're already reading this, that you are interested in the organ and its music. If you have not yet placed a regular order, please read on.

Organists' Review contains articles that inform. For players, there has been a series on preparation for the examinations of the Royal College of Organists and one on the art of improvisation. Margaret Phillips now contributes a column of advice for players tackling pieces in the A. B. organ syllabus. For performers and music lovers alike, there are studies of famous composers and their works.

Organists' Review also gives attention to the needs of organists of average ability: Janette Cooper gives answers to the many letters we receive from organists asking for advice or help.

Each issue of *Organists' Review* contains reviews of new organ and choral cassettes and compact discs, and of new published music for organ or voices. The style of the reviews is informal but all the writers are experts in their subject and experienced critics.

Then there are regular features – *Soundboard*, in which John Norman tells us what is going on in the world of organ building and *Corno Dolce*, in which the curtain round the console is drawn back to reveal what really goes on in the organ loft of an average (well, nearly average) parish church. And the advertisements: all the important pipe organ builders advertise in *OR* and some of the full colour pictures are breathtaking.

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Peterborough Cathedral - 1.10pm

Kevin Bowyer Organ recital

The Programme

Toccata and Fugue in D minor, Dorian (BWV 538) J S Bach (1685-1750)
The date of the *Dorian* Toccata and Fugue must, like so much of Bach's work, remain conjectural. No autograph copy exists, and although it was probably written between 1708 and 1717 when Bach was court organist to the Duke of Weimar, later dates have also been suggested. There is, however, evidence to suggest that the composer played it when he and his wife visited Kassel to inaugurate the organ at St Martin's Church in September 1732, and some surviving 18th century copies apparently include his own instructions for changes between the manuals.

Both movements are written in D minor without a key signature - the *Dorian* mode - and the magnificent Toccata is based entirely on the opening half-bar motif. At first the Fugue, with its serene and suave subject, contrasts with the climactic music which has preceded it, but this movement too builds to a powerful and inexorable conclusion.

Irish Tune Anon/Percy Grainger
Otherwise known as the Londonderry Air, Air from Derry or *O Danny Boy!*, this is a perfect melody. This organ arrangement, based upon Percy Grainger's lush piano version, has the melody soloed out on another manual, divided between the thumbs; the effect is spinetingling.

Blaze Away! Abe Holzmänn (1874-1939)
New Yorker and Ragtime composer Abraham Holzmänn is best known for this swanky march and his early Cakewalks. His music is popular with military bands and fairground visitors. *Blaze Away!* is certainly liturgical in the very broadest sense of the word.

Variations for Pedals on a Theme by Paganini George Thalben-Ball (1896-1986)
The great organist, George Thalben-Ball, was born a hundred years ago on June 18th. After studying at the Royal College of Music he was appointed organist at the Temple Church in London in 1923, and in 1949 proceeded additionally to Birmingham Town Hall.

The theme of this spectacular set of variations has been used by a host of other composers including Schumann, Liszt, Brahms, Rachmaninov, Lutoslawski, Benny Goodman and Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber. Presented in the pedals alone, it then spawns nine demanding variations for solo pedals, with the manuals entering only in the 10th to give a toccata-like brilliance to its final section. A reflection of its composer's astonishing technique, the work was dedicated to Dr Lewis Elmer and the American Guild of Organists, and was published in 1962.

Sonata in C minor: The 94th Psalm Julius Reubke (1834-1858)
The death of Julius Reubke aged 24 probably robbed the 19th century of one of its finest composers. His two most important works - the C minor organ sonata and the B flat minor piano sonata - both date from 1857, a year after he had begun to study with Liszt, and Reubke himself gave the first performance of the organ sonata at Merseburg Cathedral in June that year. Standing alongside Liszt's own work as a high point in 19th century organ literature, Reubke's sonata clearly reflects the preoccupations of his teacher in its harmonic language, its virtuosity, and its monothematic construction. Written as a single movement in three sections - a fantasia, adagio and fugue - the score does not, however, indicate how Reubke intended it to reflect the nine verses from the 94th Psalm on which it is based.

Tuesday 16 July

The Performer

Kevin Bowyer has won first prize at every major organ competition in the world. In his student days in London, he gave performances of the complete Organ Symphonies of Widor, Vierne and Dupré. His appetite for the gargantuan has if anything increased since that time, and his repertoire has grown to a size and breadth probably unequalled by any other player. Kevin Bowyer appears at major festivals and concert series throughout Europe and North America, including the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts. Recent recordings include a 32 CD cycle of the complete organ works of J S Bach and Sorabji's vast (350 page) Second Organ Symphony.



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