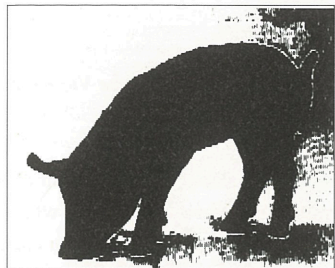


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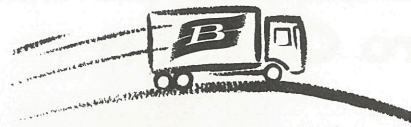


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Christopher Herrick - Organ Fireworks

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The Programme

Tuba Tune

Norman Cocker (1880-1953)
Norman Cocker was a chorister at Magdalen College, Oxford before becoming one of Henry Ley's most talented organ pupils. He was appointed assistant organist at Manchester Cathedral in 1920, and succeeded to the post of organist and choirmaster in 1943, staying there until his death.

Cocker was a fine recitalist but also composed for school orchestras and for the organ, publishing his best-known work, *Tuba Tune*, in 1922. He was also a fanatical card-player whose success was more than once attributed to his equal brilliance as a conjuror!

Evocation à la Chapelle Sixtine

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Mozart's *Ave verum* and Allegri's *Misereri*

In 1861, the Pope refused the Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein the divorce which she needed to marry Liszt. Then two of the composer's children from his own first marriage died. Deeply affected, he began to turn to religion, and in 1865 took the four minor orders of the Catholic Church.

Unsurprisingly, his music reflects this increasing preoccupation, and the *Evocation à la Chapelle Sixtine* comprises an arrangement of Allegri's *Misereri*, for years the exclusive property of the Vatican, and of Mozart's *Ave Verum*. Composed in 1862 for orchestra, Liszt subsequently arranged the *Evocation* for piano and for organ, publishing both in 1865.

Finlandia

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957), arr. Fricker

Like many of his contemporaries, the young Sibelius joined one of the underground forces which aimed to harass Finland's Russian oppressors. He also determined to develop a truly national style of composition, drawing particular inspiration from Finnish stories and legends, writing the short tone-poem *Finlandia* in 1899 as a reaction to the February Manifesto which deprived the country of its autonomy. Sibelius himself regarded it lightly and sold it outright to his publisher, losing a fortune in royalties when it proved an international success.

Adagio for strings

Samuel Barber (1909-1981); arr. Strickland

The *Adagio for Strings* was written in 1936 as the slow movement of Barber's String Quartet in B minor, op.11, but won instant success with the NBC Orchestra and Toscanini in a version for string orchestra in 1938. It has since eclipsed all of the composer's other work, and a number of arrangements have been made including one for choir by Barber himself which uses the words of the *Agnus Dei*.

Sonata in G Op 28

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Allegro maestoso; Allegretto; Andante espressivo; Presto

In June 1895 Elgar was working as a teacher and therefore had difficulty in completing this organ sonata, his first full-length abstract work, in time for its première on 8th July. Hugh Blair, the Worcester Cathedral organist behind its composition, therefore had only four days to learn a work which proved to have considerable technical and musical challenges. The performance was not entirely successful, but even so the astute listener must surely have detected something of the mature Elgar within its pages.

Pilgrims' Chorus from Tannhäuser

Richard Wagner (1813-1883) arr. Liszt

Liszt first heard *Tannhäuser* in 1849 when he produced it himself in *Weimar*, but he had owned a score for three years and in 1848 made a brilliant piano transcription of the overture. Similar arrangements of other sections soon followed, but the *Pilgrim's Chorus* had to wait until the mid 1860s, when it became the only one of his Wagner arrangements to be written for organ.

Rakoczi March

Hector Berlioz (1803-1858) arr. Best

W T Best was well-known as the greatest English organist of his day. Based at St George's Hall, Liverpool, where he played over 5,000 pieces between 1855 and 1885, he also opened the Willis organ at the Royal Albert Hall, and was invited by Liszt to give a recital in Rome in 1882. His programmes included baroque and modern composers, but were most notable for his many arrangements of chamber and orchestral music, including the *Rakoczi March* which Berlioz had written in 1846.

The Performer

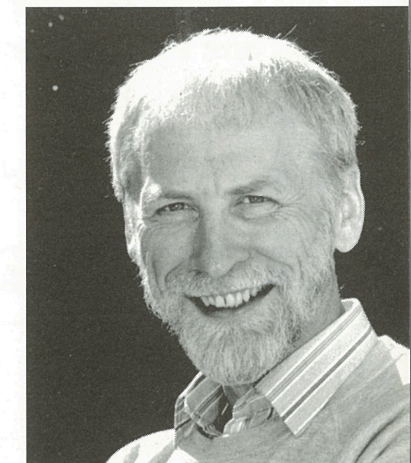
Christopher Herrick's international career as a concert organist was launched in 1984 when he left his post at Westminster Abbey where, over a period of ten years, he had played for countless royal and state occasions.

His solo career has been complemented by much recording work, now exclusively for Hyperion Records with whom he has made his famous *Organ Fireworks* discs from great organs around the world. Future plans include recording the complete organ works of Bach on various Metzler organs in Switzerland.

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