

# Oundle Festival of Music & Drama

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## 1997

10-12 APRIL

Schedule  
& details from:-

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Oundle School Chapel - 11.30am

## François Espinasse Organ Recital

### The Programme

*Praeludium in G minor (BuxWV163)* Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)  
Bach's great north German predecessor, Dietrich Buxtehude, rarely left Lübeck, where he was organist at the Marienkirche. His reputation spread far and wide, however, and both Handel and Bach travelled to hear him play, Bach walking the 150 miles from Arnstadt in 1705. Like others with similar jobs, Buxtehude had to be largely self-sufficient and composed both for voice and for organ, adopting a keyboard style which, in the tradition of Frescobaldi and Sweelinck, alternates flamboyant, improvisatory passages with stricter fugal writing. Many of his pieces have elaborate pedal parts, but the G minor Praeludium is written for manuals alone.

*Choral Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr: 3* J S Bach (1685-1750)  
*chorale arrangements (BWV 662, 663, 664)*

Towards the end of his life Bach gathered together 18 of his chorale arrangements in a single manuscript, perhaps for possible publication. Many date back to his youth, among them three settings of the German equivalent of the Gloria, *Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr* ('To God in the Highest alone be the glory'). The first ornaments the original hymn tune in the soprano, while the other voices develop an idea from the first line in exquisite counterpoint. In the second the melody is in the tenor, but is so decorated that it becomes barely recognisable, and in the third it appears in its original version only towards the end. The texture of this movement recalls Bach's trio sonatas, and in writing it the composer seems to have been more concerned to capture the mood of the text than to make an earnest arrangement of the chorale itself.

*Choral varié from Prélude, Adagio et* Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)  
*Choral Varié sur le thème du Veni creator, Op 4 (1930)*

Although Duruflé is well known for the setting of the Requiem which he composed in 1947, he wrote very few other pieces, giving opus numbers to only a dozen or so works in over 35 years. Primarily an organist and teacher, he studied first with Tournemire and then, under Gigout, won first prize at the Paris Conservatoire. He later worked there as professor of harmony for 27 years, and in 1930 was appointed organist at St Etienne-du-Mont. In the same year he wrote the extensive and fastidiously-wrought *Prélude, Adagio and Choral Varié*, which won a prize from *Les Amis de l'Orgue*.

*Guntur Sari* François Bernard Mâche (b.1935)  
François Bernard Mâche was a student of Olivier Messiaen at the Paris Conservatoire. He is a specialist in antique Greece and ethnomusicology, especially the music of south-east Asia. He has written several pieces for harpsichord, orchestra, organ and also instruments with tape. Mâche wrote about this piece: "This work was achieved in July 1990, at the suggestion of Xavier Darasse, organist and French composer, to whom it is dedicated but who sadly died before hearing it. The title of the piece evokes the name of a famous gamelan in Java dating from the 18th century, and means 'Storm of Flowers'. The work was premiered by Japanese organist Kei Koto in 1994.

*Variations sur un psaume huguenot* André Isoir (b.1935)  
French organist André Isoir wrote this piece in 1975; it gained him first prize for organ composition in *Les Amis de l'Orgue* competition in 1979. The theme of this variation is a psalm of the reformed church of Geneva.

Saturday 20 July

Please join us at the Festival Club for a complimentary cup of coffee before the performance.

### The Performer

Born in 1961, François Espinasse is co-titulaire organist at St Severin in Paris, with an impressive list of prizes to his credit including, from his student days, the *Médailles d'Or* in the class of his teachers Xavier Darasse and André Isoir. His virtuoso technique is complemented by scholarship and sensitivity, as exemplified in his many recordings featuring music from the French and German baroque. His disc of music by Marchand and Guilain won the *Prix de l'Académie du Disque Allemand*. This is his first visit to tutor at OIF's summer school.



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