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Celebrity Organ Recital Jacques van Oortmerssen plays Bach

Oundle School Chapel - 5pm

The Programme

Tocatta, Adagio and Fugue in C major, BWV 564 J S Bach (1685-1750)
While Bach was working at Weimar, the court orchestra acquired the parts for a number of concertos by Vivaldi. Their use of ritornello form and their three-movement structure were quite new to Bach, and in writing the Tocatta, Adagio and Fugue he seems to have been trying to synthesise this fashionable idiom with the established organ style of North Germany. The first movement, for example, contrasts the runs of the traditional toccata with concerto-like ideas, and the flowing Adagio could almost be by Vivaldi himself. In closing with a fugue, Bach combines both the old and the new, for the form was both central to the North German tradition and a device commonly used by Vivaldi to end his concertos.

Wir glauben all' an einen Gott, Vater BWV 740 attrib. J S Bach
This setting of the chorale melody, 'Wir glauben all' an einen Gott' is the 'odd one out' in today's concert, for although it was formerly attributed to Bach, its style and the lack of reliable sources suggest that it may be by someone else. The most likely candidate is Johann Ludwig Krebs (1713-1780), who entered the Thomaschule in Leipzig in July 1726 as a 13 year old and worked closely with Bach as a pupil, singer, harpsichordist and copyist until he was appointed to a post in Zwickau in 1737. His own works are closely modelled on his teacher's and it is not always easy to distinguish them from Bach's.

Trio in D minor, BWV 583 J S Bach
Very little is known about the origins of this reflective little piece, but both its name and its strict use of a three-part texture recall the six great trio sonatas which Bach wrote in Leipzig. It relies for much of its effect on sequential passages and imitation between the two upper parts, though the pedal part becomes quite active during the later stages of the work.

*Partite diverse sopra 'Sei Gegrüßet, Jesu götig'/
'O Jesu, du edle Gabe' BWV 768* J S Bach
The 'Partite diverse sopra Sei Gegrüßet' is typical of many of Bach's earlier works; surviving today only in copies made by friends and pupils, they are very difficult to date. The form of this work, however, suggests that it is the product of his extreme youth, for its use of eleven short variations on a chorale theme is very similar to compositions by his older contemporary and possible teacher, Georg Böhm. By far the longest of the variations is the tenth, which the composer treats as if it were a Sarabande. Although organists have, since Griepenkerl's researches in the 1840s, long associated this superb set of chorale variations with the text 'Sei Gegrüßet', recent investigations by Albert Clement suggest strongly that Bach had in mind the other words often sung to the melody: 'O Jesu, du edle Gabe'.

Concerto in F, BWV 978 (after Vivaldi's Op 3 no 3) J S Bach
Allegro; Largo; Allegro
The Weimar orchestra seems to have acquired at least some scores of Italian music from its employer's nephew, Duke Johann Ernst, who in 1711 went to study at the University of Utrecht. During his stay he visited Amsterdam, then the music publishing capital of Europe, and as well as acquiring a lot of Italian music, he also heard the blind organist, J J de Graff, playing some newly-composed Italian concertos as keyboard solos. Among the most influential publications which he seems to have taken home was Vivaldi's famous set, 'L'Estro Armonico', for this had only recently been published in Amsterdam by Estienne Roger, and yet it is the source for three of Bach's sixteen surviving arrangements for solo keyboard. Today's concerto is the third of the set, and was transposed by Bach from the original key of G major into F.

Sunday 12th July

J S Bach

Tocatta in F, BWV 540

The exhilarating opening is essentially a strict canon with both hands engaged over a pedal point. A virtuosic pedal solo based on a single motif follows. Bach presents this material again in the dominant key before a lengthy section of perpetual motion which modulates into unexpected keys, developing material from the opening with great ingenuity and percussive energy.

The Performer

Widely regarded as the authentic Bach organ virtuoso of our time, Dutch organist Jacques van Oortmerssen makes a welcome return to the Festival, both as recitalist and tutor to the summer school students. A pupil of Marie-Claire Alain in Paris, he was awarded the Prix d'Excellence in 1976, and since 1979 has been Professor of Organ at the Sweelinck Conservatory, Amsterdam. In 1982 he succeeded Gustav Leonhardt as organiste titulaire of the Waalse Kerk, and is visiting professor at the University of Göteborg, and the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. Jacques van Oortmerssen combines his energetic professorial life with an active career as recitalist, conductor and composer, and makes many recordings; in 1995 he began recording the complete organworks of J S Bach on the most important historical organs in Europe.



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Bach at Twilight Suites for Solo Cello

Daniel Yeadon

St Rumbold's Church, Stoke Doyle - 9.30pm

The Programme

Suite no 1 in G J S Bach (1685-1750)
Prélude; Allemande; Courante; Sarabande; Menuett 1 - Menuett 2; Gigue

Suite no 5 in C minor
Prélude; Allemande; Courante; Sarabande; Gavotte 1 - Gavotte 2; Gigue

For programme notes on Bach's Suites for Solo Cello, please turn to page 5

The Performer

Daniel Yeadon studied cello as a child but read physics at Oxford, subsequently working as a scientific book editor. Two years after his graduation from Oxford he went to the Royal College of Music to study baroque and classical cello, and upon leaving joined the European Community Baroque Orchestra.

Since 1991 Daniel's principal involvement has been with the renowned baroque ensemble Florilegium, performing all over the world. In 1995 Daniel joined the Fitzwilliam String Quartet, famous for its recording of the complete quartets of Shostakovich. He also plays with many of the period instrument ensembles based in London, including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the King's Consort and English Baroque Soloists.

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The Festival Club is open today 12 noon to 11.30pm
Bar Hours: 6pm to 10.30pm