

# Organ Recital Anne Page

5pm  
Oundle School Chapel

## The Programme

*Prelude and Fugue in G, BWV 541*

**J S Bach**  
(1685-1750)

Although Bach probably wrote the G major Prelude and Fugue before he left Weimar in 1717, a copy in his own handwriting survives today from the last years of his life. The Prelude opens with a toccata-like flourish and the following passage featuring block chords returns throughout the movement, punctuating exultant passages like the ritornello of a Baroque concerto. The Fugue is equally jubilant, and while its repeated note subject recalls earlier keyboard music, Bach seems to be enjoying himself rather than being consciously archaic.

*Trio sonata no 2 in C minor, BWV 526*  
*Vivace; Largo; Allegro*

**J S Bach**

From about 1711, when he discovered Vivaldi's concertos, Bach was captivated by the new forms of Italian instrumental music, and although each of the six trio sonatas, BWV 525-530 was headed 'Sonata a 2 clav. et Pedal', it is clear that they represent an attempt to transfer the texture of the Italian trio sonata to the organ. They were not intended for church use - contemporary services presented no opportunity for their performance - and in 1802 Bach's first biographer, J N Forkel, suggested that they may have been intended as study material for Wilhelm Friedrich Bach. Their three-movement form is more typical of the Italian concerto than of the multi-movement trio sonata, and the precise date of composition is unknown, but there is some evidence to suggest that Bach compiled the set in about 1727, when Wilhelm was 17 years old.

*Feuerzungen (Tongues of Fire)*

**Carl Rüttli**  
(b.1949)

Written in June 1998, this work was commissioned by a church choir as a leaving present to their conductor. The composer writes: 'It is based on the Whitsun plainchant Veni Sancte Spiritus. The first verses arise wild and blowing like storm and fire. But all of a sudden the storm ceases and in this silence the call of a wild dove rings out (the dove as the common symbol for the Holy Spirit). In the background the plainchant continues very softly with the verse O lux beatissima (O most happy light). This mysterious and atmospheric moment is suddenly interrupted by the joyful voice of a blackbird at close quarters (the blackbird song is my personal symbol for the Holy Spirit). This blackbird song becomes more and more a complete theme into which the first theme of the plainchant is woven'.

*Evocation, from Arcature*

**Lionel Rogg** (b.1936)

Evocation, dedicated to Anne Page, is one of a set of three pieces written by Lionel Rogg in 1994. He writes: 'My role as organist of the Victoria Hall in Geneva inspired me to write in a style complementary to the new organ built in 1993 by Van den Heuvel, in the style of Cavaillé-Coll.'

Evocation expresses a certain melancholy typical of winter in Geneva suddenly relieved by the invigorating thought of Ernest Ansermet conducting Stravinsky's Rite of Spring.'

*Intermezzo (1933)*

**Jehan Alain** (1911-1940)

Jehan Alain trained at the Paris Conservatoire where, like Messiaen, he studied composition with Dukas and organ with Dupré. He soon earned a reputation as a brilliant organist and pianist, but devoted much time in the 1930s to composition, and in 1934 entered his new Intermezzo for two pianos and bassoon in a competition at the Conservatoire. The judges, however, found it 'incomprehensible', and it remained unknown until his transcription for organ was published, along with a number of his other compositions, after his death in action in World War II. Its rippling twos against threes on the manuals, and its melodic line in the pedals, are entirely typical of Alain's fastidious style.

*Mass (1699)*

**Nicholas de Grigny**  
(1672-1703)

*Et in terra pax, à 5; Basse de Trompette ou de Cromorne; Récit de Tierce en Taille*

In 1700, the 15 year old Bach copied out the whole of Nicholas de Grigny's *Premier livre d'Orgue, contenant une messe et les Hymnes des principales festes de l'année*. This had been published during the previous year, 300 years ago, and was one of a number of masses composed by French organists in the second half of the 17th century in which the singers alternated with solos from the organ.

In keeping with contemporary ecclesiastical requirements, many of the individual movements paraphrase the appropriate plainchants, but de Grigny also seeks to capture the mood of the text, writing the plainchant in the pedals in the Et in terra pax à 5, and in the left hand in the Récit de Tierce en Taille. The chant is much less prominent in the fugal Basse de Trompette ou de Cromorne, but emerges clearly in the uppermost part as the movement comes to an end.

*Prelude and Fugue in E flat, BWV 552*

**J S Bach**

One of Bach's longest and grandest works for the organ, the E flat Prelude and Fugue is difficult to date. Both movements appear in part 3 of the Clavierübung, however, with the Prelude at the beginning and the Fugue at the end, and as this was published in 1739 it is likely that they were composed, or at least revised, at about this time.

The Prelude includes elements of the French Overture and some fugal writing, and overall is written in a kind of giant rondo form. In contrast, the three distinct sections of the Fugue have inspired some commentators to suggest that it is a representation of the Holy Trinity, in which the slow opening five-part exposition depicts God the Father, the sprightly middle section God the Son, and the final passage, which combines ideas from the other two midst rushing scalic patterns, God the Holy Spirit.

## The Performer

One of several tutors to be making a welcome return to the Oundle Summer School this year, Australian born Anne Page now lives and works in Cambridge. As a performer her commitment to music by living composers has led to the commissioning and premières of new works, most recently of music by Swiss composer Carl Rüttli. Equally an enthusiast for early music, she performs regularly on historic instruments in the Netherlands and Belgium, and has studied early performance practice in Amsterdam with one of its



foremost exponents, Jacques van Oortmerssen. She has appeared many times in recitals for trumpet and organ with Crispian Steele-Perkins, virtuoso of the baroque trumpet.

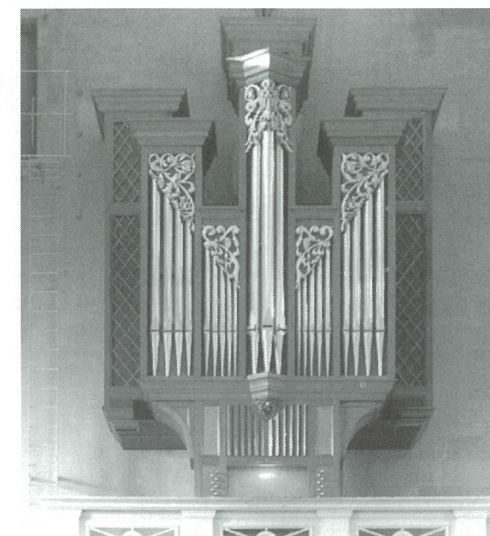
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