

NOTTINGHAM HIGH SCHOOL

DIFFERENT SCHOOLS: SAME CHALLENGE
Some people like organs because of their engineering; others are more fascinated by their sound and musical repertoire. Many people have no idea what goes on behind the façade, but players and listeners alike depend on a good layout, a responsive action, logical winding and well-balanced tone colours. Nothing is more encouraging for good technique than having a first-class instrument.

HARRISON & HARRISON

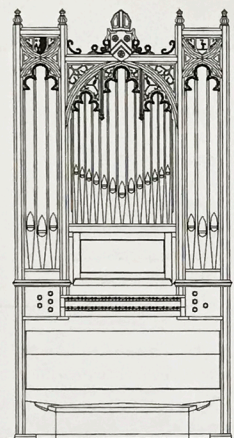
ST JOHN'S ROAD, MEADOWFIELD

DURHAM DH7 8YH

telephone 0191 378 2222 fax 0191 378 3388

h.h@btinternet.com

www.harrison-organs.co.uk



WINCHESTER COLLEGE

Wednesday 20th July - Twilight Organ Recital

WILLIAM WHITEHEAD

9pm Oundle School Chapel

Dances with Diapasons

<i>Lüb</i>	Andrew Synott (b.1970)
<i>Praeludium in E major</i>	Dietrich Buxtehude (c.1637-1707)
<i>Ciacona in F minor</i>	Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)
<i>Prelude and Fugue in C, BWV 547</i>	J S Bach (1685-1750)
<i>Deux Danses à Agni Yavishita</i>	Jehan Alain (1911-40)
<i>Prélude et Danse fuguée</i>	Gaston Litaize (1909-91)
<i>Gaudeamus in loci pace</i>	James MacMillan (b. 1959)

The pulse of the dance runs through today's programme, from the *ostinato* mantra of 'Lüb' (Gaelic for 'stitch'), to the surreal, disconnected dance that the right hand executes against the serene left hand in Macmillan's 'Gaudeamus in Loci pace'.

The incisive presence of the organ has always been supremely capable of 'giving the beat', as the composers of the German Baroque period knew so well. One can almost define Buxtehude's style as a triangular relationship between rhetorical freedom, fugal control and unfettered dance. Indeed his fugues have a tendency, like truant children, to abandon the fugal classroom to join the dance in the playground as often as they can. This 'E major Praeludium' shows all these characteristics and takes some excursions into rather extreme keys on its journey. Pachelbel's 'F minor Chaconne' takes the traditional baroque form of chaconne, originally a dance, to heights of elegance and invention. A chaconne is a piece constructed over a repeated bass-line and this one is amongst the most simple, consisting of only four descending notes. The variety of figuration Pachelbel weaves above it makes a perfect arch shape, moving from simple chords to semiquaver arabesques, and back again to chords. J S Bach learnt much from his predecessor, Buxtehude, and his 'Great' C major Prelude and Fugue is one of the many which are infused with dance, this time an elegant work in the time signature of 9/8. The dancing Prelude is followed by one of Bach's magnificent *tours de force*, a Fugue in which he displays his contrapuntal ingenuity to the maximum. The final pedal entry of the subject, in majestic augmentation, is the text book's favourite demonstration of this device.

The two pieces by French composers present a different face of the dance. 'Agni Yavishita' is the Hindu God of Fire; Alain had become fascinated with eastern mythology on visiting the 1931 Paris Colonial Exhibition. Alain tints his harmonies with an eastern colour, and one is left with a picture of a mischievous and not entirely benign God. Like much of the music of this elusive and mystical composer, the dance becomes an eloquent medium through which to express an energy at times life-affirming, at others destructively self-consuming. Blind composer Gaston Litaize uses dance rhythms similarly; there are demons and goblins buried within this music, too, though one can't help feeling that there is a dash of humour with it. Either way, the rhythmic energy sweeps all before it, and drives the piece to its crashing conclusion.

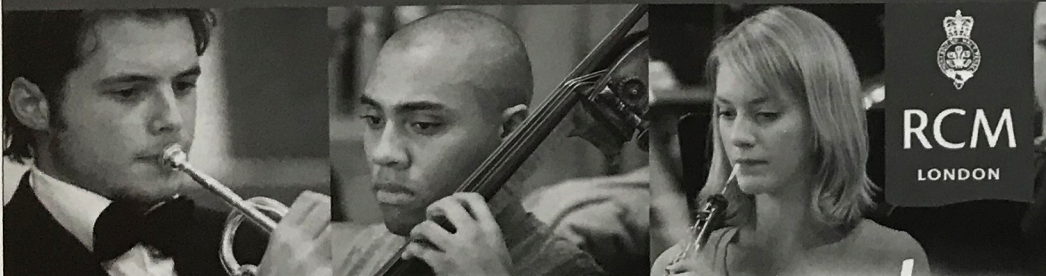
To rejoin the quiet of a summer's evening, the programme ends with James MacMillan's 'Gaudeamus in loci pace'. Written for Pluscarden Abbey in Scotland, the left hand plays a very slow version of the chant for All Saints (*Gaudeamus*), unperturbable in its serenity. The right hand adds swirls of bird-song, to be played 'like a slip jig'. This birdsong, a sort of 'Dance of God', continues after the chant has reached its conclusion, eventually fluttering up into the rafters to stillness.



William Whitehead has gained a wide reputation for his engaging and inspiring interpretation of the organ repertoire. Since gaining first prize in the Odense International organ competition in 2004, his recital career has become increasingly busy both in the UK and overseas. Upon leaving Oxford University William

became Assistant Organist of Rochester Cathedral and then took up a position as Lecturer at the Royal Academy of Music, and Director of Music of St Mary's Bourne Street. In 2003 he co-founded the London Organ Forum with Ann Elise Smoot.

become one of tomorrow's world class musicians



Royal College of Music, London

Get the NEW prospectus now - call 020 7589 3643 or email info@rcm.ac.uk
Visit the website at www.rcm.ac.uk

Royal College of Music, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7 2BS Tel 020 7589 3643 Email info@rcm.ac.uk

today