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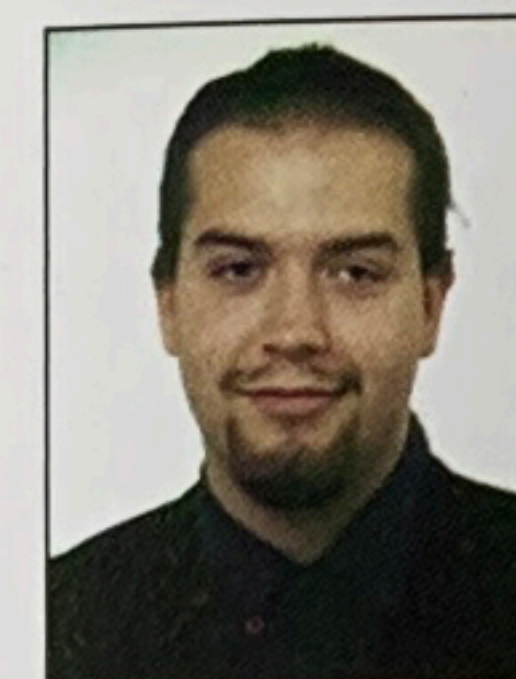
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Friday 21st July



ERWAN LE PRADO

1.10pm Peterborough Cathedral

Suite pour Orgue, Op 5

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

Prélude; Sicilienne; Toccata

Maurice Duruflé's very small output for the organ reflects the fastidious care and attention he lavished upon the process of composition. His sensuous harmonies and melodies often remind listeners of Ravel or Fauré, whilst his orchestral approach to the organ is a direct development of the French symphonic school, pioneered by César Franck; centrally, the spirit of Gregorian nourishes the soul of his unique language.

'*Suite pour Orgue*', published in 1934, is recognised as one of the most captivating works for organ of the 20th century. *Prélude* begins with obscure, dark sonorities, developing a chant-like melody through a gradual crescendo, leading to a stunning climax; a lyrical passage is interjected before the movement dies away as mysteriously and softly as it began. The rocking *Sicilienne* shows Duruflé's skill at melodic writing and here Ravel's influence is most apparent. *Toccata*, a thrilling outburst, is notorious for its extreme demands upon the performer's technique; it remains one of the most virtuosic pieces written for the organ.

Sonata in C minor, The 94th Psalm Julius Reubke (1834-1858)

Grave-Larghetto-Allegro con fuoco; Adagio; Allegro

"Truly no one could feel more deeply the loss which Art has suffered in your Julius, than the one who has followed with admiring sympathy his noble, constant and successful strivings in these latter years, and who will ever remain true to the memory of his friendship." Franz Liszt (letter of condolence to organ-builder Adolf Reubke, father of Julius Reubke)

Reubke's organ sonata dates from 1857, when he was invited to participate in a recital on the famous Ladegast organ in the Cathedral of Merseburg in Germany. 'The 94th Psalm' is an epic symphonic poem in which most of the musical material derives from the first four bars. Three movements emerge, linked to each other and unified by the same theme. Underpinning this giant

soundscape, cast in the manner of a spontaneous improvisatory fantasy, are verses from the Psalm in question:

1. O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew Thyself
2. Lift up thyself, Thou judge of the earth; render a reward to the proud
3. Lord, how long shall the wicked triumph?
6. They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless
7. Yet they say, the Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it
17. Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence
19. In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul
22. But the Lord is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge
23. And He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness

Reubke, who was one of Liszt's favourite pupils, was already suffering from consumption when he cast this great work; he died the following year. One cannot help feeling that the Sonata bears autobiographical features, alluding to the injustice of his own fate.

French organist **Erwan Le Prado** began his musical education at the Conservatoire de Caen, where he now teaches organ, composition and improvisation. At the young age of 15 he entered the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris, where he achieved first prize in improvisation, harmony, counterpoint, fugue and 20th century composition. His professors have included Olivier Latry, Loïc Mallié, Thierry Escaich and Marie-Claire Alain.

Subsequently Erwan has distinguished himself in numerous international organ competitions, winning first prize at the Concours International Suisse in Genève (1999) and the prestigious Grand Prix de Chartres Interpretation (2000). In parallel to his recital career, which takes him to venues throughout Europe, Japan and North America, Erwan devotes his time to teaching and engagements as a competition juror; recent masterclasses have taken him to South Africa and to the National University of Bogota. This is his third appearance at Oundle International Festival.

For specification of the restored Peterborough Cathedral organ see pages 46/47.