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Thursday 19th July

## Organ Recital TOM BELL

8pm St Mary and All Saints' Church,  
Fotheringhay



### *Fantasia in F minor, K608*

W A Mozart (1756-1791)

This lofty and passionate composition was created for a mechanical organ attached to a clock – a popular frivolity found in the homes of wealthy Viennese citizens. The music far transcends the miniaturism of the barrel organ: here are flourishes and fugues surrounding a tender melody with inspired variations – all on a big scale.

### *Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne in C, BuxWV 137*

Diderik Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Diderik Buxtehude served from 1668 as organist of the Marienkirche, Lübeck. He was certainly one of the most important composers of the German mid-Baroque, his output extending beyond organ literature to vocal, chamber and other keyboard music. His organ präludia represent the high-point of the stilus fantasticus (characterised as 'utter lunacy' by a tutor on an Oundle for Organists course a few years ago...!). Two pieces feature in tonight's programme and both reappear, somewhat transmogrified, in the work that ends the recital.

### *Harmonies, Etude No. 1*

György Ligeti (1923-2006)

This is the first of Ligeti's two Etudes for organ – a study both of legato playing and of sound. The bellows of the organ have to be incapacitated to perform the piece, and the resultant drop in wind-pressure causes the pipes to cough, moan and wheeze – sounding various harmonics and microtones. The effect is unique, captivating and hypnotic in equal measure. On the other hand, the effect of explaining to the owners of any given organ that their prized possession is to be dismembered is mildly amusing, although of course no harm is done. (Thanks to organ builder Vincent Woodstock for his co-operation!)

### *Präludium in G minor, BuxWV 148* *Nazard (from 'Suite Française')*

Diderik Buxtehude  
Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

Another anniversary commemorated in 2007, of great significance to organists, is the centenary of the birth of Jean Langlais. Langlais, who was blind from the age of two, followed in the footsteps of Franck and Tournemire, being appointed Organist Titulaire of Sainte-Clotilde, Paris, in 1945. He was an immensely prolific composer, an inspiring teacher and a noted improviser (as were his two predecessors). 'Nazard' is the second movement of the 'Suite Française' (1948).

### *Hommage à Diderik Buxtehude*

Petr Eben (b. 1929)

Petr Eben is one of the Czech Republic's leading composers. This piece was written to celebrate Buxtehude's 350th birthday (sadly, the great man himself was unable to attend). The piece is a homage in two dimensions: in its sectional structure (rather akin to the multi-sectional stilus fantasticus compositions of old), and in its musical material, drawn from the two Buxtehude works heard earlier. The result is both witty and affectionate, if a tad irreverent!

**Tom Bell** attended the very first Oundle 'Pulling Out The Stops' course, for early-stages organists, in 1997. In 2006 he graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music with first class honours, having won the Organ Recital Prize in 2004. Tom is taught by Kevin Bowyer in Manchester, and Jacques van Oortmerssen in Amsterdam. As a soloist Tom has most recently played at Coventry, Guildford, Blackburn, Carlisle and Manchester Cathedrals; the inaugural Glasgow International Organ Festival and at Tynset Kirke (Norway). Some of these engagements were awarded by Oundle for Organists following Tom's participation at the 2006 Advanced Academy course. As organ scholar at Manchester Cathedral (2003-2005) he made a significant contribution to the Cathedral's Messiaen Series in addition to learning to accompany/direct the choir and making tea to placate irate lay-clerks. Tom enjoys playing a wide range of music, from before Bach to a very long time after, and tries to present varied programmes. He does, however, have a particular affection for music written after 1900, and is very active in persuading living composers to write new repertoire. Other affections include steam engines, real ale and single malts.

**Bar open before the recital.**