



ORGAN GIANTS

J.S. BACH • MENDELSSOHN • SCHUMANN • BRAHMS • B-A-C-H

William Fox

Sunday 13th June 2021, 4.30 pm

 **ST PAUL'S**
CATHEDRAL

Complete Organ Works of J. S. Bach (1685 – 1750)

Recital XII

Fantasia in C minor

BWV 562

Dating from his time in Weimar, Bach presents in this Fantasia an imposing five-part contrapuntal façade. The opening motif, characterised by its falling shape and appoggiaturas, is passed between each voice, achieving a balance of grandeur and intricacy.

Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier

633

Emanating from the *Orgelbuchlein*, this serene miniature is a revised version of BWV 634, the manuscript of which Bach inscribed 'distinctus' (more clearly). While its close relationship to BWV 634 is apparent, Bach's subtle modifications ensure the piece's elegant individuality.

Herr Gott, dich loben wir

725

This chorale is the Lutheran paraphrase of the *Te Deum Laudamus* – a hymn of praise. The text was central to the liturgy of Bach's day and was therefore utilised frequently in the composer's output, including numerous appearances in his cantatas. This dignified and striking five-part setting was likely intended as an organ accompaniment to the hymn. Bach's unique instinct for drama is displayed by his response to the text through colourful harmonic variations.

Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier

634

presents the ornamented chorale melody as a canon, incorporated within a rich five-part texture. As this hymn was intended to be a prelude to the sermon, the concept of one voice following the other perhaps reflects the chorale's text "lead our minds and desires to the sweet teachings of heaven."

Nun danket alle Gott

657

Johann Crüger's famous chorale has since been adopted into English hymnals as 'Now thank we, all our God'. In this setting from the Leipzig 'Great Eighteen', the melody is treated as a soprano cantus

firmus. The melodic material of the accompanying voices, with frequent use of imitation, is also derived from the chorale. The work is one of Bach's most irresistibly buoyant offerings.

Notes by Samuel Bristow

William Fox

William Fox has been the Sub-Organist of St Paul's Cathedral, London, since July 2018. He works with the world-famous choir of St Paul's, accompanying and directing the music at services, including services of national significance. He also works as part of the ambitious music outreach programme at the Cathedral and gives recitals throughout the UK and abroad. Since September 2019, William has additionally been a junior fellow at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. William was a chorister at York Minster, before holding organ scholarships at Wells and Hereford Cathedrals. Prior to his appointment at St Paul's, he was organ scholar and an academic scholar at Magdalen College, Oxford, from where he graduated with a first class degree in Music. William became a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists as a teenager, winning the Turpin and Durrant prize. He has appeared on BBC radio, BBC television, and Classic FM, and worked through much of Europe and in the USA. As a piano accompanist, he is the winner of the 2018 Sir Anthony Lewis Memorial Prize Competition. His debut recording, of the organ works of Cecilia McDowall, was released in 2021, gaining 5 * reviews in *Choir and Organ* and *The Organ*. As a piano accompanist, he is the winner of the 2018 Sir Anthony Lewis Memorial Prize Competition.

Next recital

Sunday 20th June at 4.30 pm

Christopher Stokes (Manchester Cathedral)

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