

Forthcoming Concerts in the Reid Concert Hall.

- Thursday 20th May - Ireneus & Luba Zuk
Canadian piano duo
- Friday 21st May - The Texas Winds
- Sunday 23rd May - University Madrigal Group
- Sundays 30th May,
6th & 13th June - Organ Recitals in the series Bach 1982

EDINBURGH
UNIVERSITY
CONCERTS

1981-82

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY MADRIGAL GROUP

MICHAEL TURNBULL
director

DAVID BLACKWELL
organ

Reid Concert Hall, Sunday 23 May 1982

Admission by Programme price £1.00
(Students and OAPs 50p)

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Inter brachia salvatoris mei

In the name of my Saviour I wish to live, I desire to die. There, in safety, I will sing and praise you, O Lord: for you have sustained me and prevented my enemies from triumphing over me.

Hosianna dem Sohne David

Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Ich weiss, dass mein Erlöser lebt

I know that my redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has thus been destroyed, then from my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself; and my eyes shall behold, I and not another. 23.5.82

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Forthcoming Concerts in the

Thursday 20th May

Friday 21st May

Sunday 23rd May

Sundays 30th May,
6th & 13th June

Christ lag in Todesbanden

Chorale harmonization	Schein
Chorale prelude BWV 625	J.S. Bach
Sacred concerto	Scheidt

<i>Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir</i>	Schein
<i>Was betrübst du dich, meine Seele?</i> SWV 353	Schütz

<i>Selig sind die Toten</i> SWV 391	Schütz
<i>Inter brachia salvatoris mei</i> SWV 82	Schütz

Chorale prelude <i>O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sünde gross</i>	
BWV 622	J.S. Bach

<i>Hosianna dem Sohne David</i>	Schein
<i>Ich weiss, dass mein Erlöser lebt</i> SWV 393	Schütz

INTERVAL

(during the interval the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments will be open to members of the audience)

Cantata <i>Christ lag in Todesbanden</i> BWV 4	J.S. Bach
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BACH 1982

Organ Recitals in the Reid Concert Hall

Sunday 30th May – Gerald Hendrie (Open University)

Sunday 6th June – Marilyn Mason (Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.)

Sunday 13th June – James Dalton (The Queen's College, Oxford)

Subsidised by the Scottish Arts Council

Printed by the University of Edinburgh

Christ lag in Todesbanden

(Bach sets all seven verses; Schein and Scheidt set v.1)

Christ lay in the bonds of death, sacrificed for our sins. He is risen again and has brought us life. Therefore we shall be joyful, we shall praise God and be thankful, and sing Hallelujah!

Mankind could not overcome death: therefore all our sins could not be cleansed. Thus soon came Death and overpowered us, keeping us imprisoned in his kingdom. Hallelujah!

Jesus Christ, Son of God, is come in our place and has taken away sin and death. Of Death's might and power only the outline remains: he has lost his sting. Hallelujah!

Death and Life fought a marvellous battle. Life gained the victory, swallowed up by Death. The scriptures have proclaimed how one death will conquer all others; death has become a mockery. Hallelujah!

Here is the true Easter lamb whom God has sacrificed. He is high on the cross, an offering of greatest love. His blood marks our door; it upholds the faith of the dead; the murderer can harm us no longer. Hallelujah!

Thus we celebrate the great feast with heartfelt joy and wonder. The Lord has appeared to us; he is the very sun himself. By his shining grace he fills our hearts with light. The night of sin has vanished. Hallelujah!

We eat and live well on the true Easter bread. The old leaven is supplanted by the word of grace. Christ is our food: he alone will provide for our souls. Faith will not live by any other means. Hallelujah!

Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir

From deep distress have I cried to you, Lord God, hear my call. Turn your gracious ears to me and open them to my entreaty; for if you will take notice of what sin and wrong is done, who can stand before you, Lord?

Was betrübst du dich, meine Seele?

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.

Selig sind die Toten

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Inter brachia salvatoris mei

In the name of my Saviour I wish to live, I desire to die. There, in safety, I will sing and praise you, O Lord: for you have sustained me and prevented my enemies from triumphing over me.

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I know that my redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has thus been destroyed, then from my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself; and my eyes shall behold, I and not another.

The Reid Concert Hall is no church, and the performance in it of sacred music would certainly have seemed incongruous to any of the composers represented in tonight's programme (although they could not have failed to notice its organ's suitability for their works). But that is no reason for not allowing the concert-going, as opposed to church-going, public to enjoy some fine music, regardless of whether they treat the performances as 'ad maiorem Dei gloriam' or merely as satisfying a more earthly passion.

Even in concert performances, however, the religious background of such pieces cannot be ignored. Their common theme of Christ's passion and resurrection is explicit in many of the texts set and confirmed by the liturgical function specified for a number of items. For example, the seven verses of Luther's hymn 'Christ lag in Todesbanden' allude not only to the Gospel appointed for Easter Day (St Mark's account of the resurrection) but also to the Epistle (I Corinthians 5, vv. 6-8) with its description of Christ as the 'paschal lamb' and its exhortation to 'celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Collections of such hymns or chorales generally specified which items were 'proper' for a particular time in the Church's year: thus tonight's opening chorale is designated by Schein, in his Cantional, as 'for the resurrection of Jesus Christ'. Bach's choice of 'Christ lag in Todesbanden' as the basis for his Easter Day cantata is merely a continuation of this tradition, as is his Orgelbüchlein collection (the source of tonight's organ solos) which contains chorale preludes grouped according to the Church Calendar.

But there is more than liturgical propriety behind tonight's choice of composers and works. The Germanic shower of Schütz, Schein and Scheidt were all born between 1585 and 1587 and worked in close proximity at Dresden, Leipzig and Halle respectively, Schein being one of Bach's eminent predecessors at St Thomas's church. All maintained the musical traditions of the Lutheran Church while adding to them new contrasts of texture and instrumentation largely inspired by recent developments in Italy. The latter can be heard in both Scheidt's setting of 'Christ lag' for double choir and the 'Aus tiefer Not' duet by Schein, yet each work still takes as its basis a Lutheran chorale.

Schütz, on the other hand, rarely borrows such tunes, preferring a freedom in which melody, rhythm, harmony and texture are all means to the ultimate aim of a dramatic realisation of the text. The passage 'I wish to live, I desire to die' from 'Inter brachia salvatoris mei' is but one example of the success of this approach: here life-giving dance rhythms are suddenly followed by tense, sustained harmonies, the accumulation of individual melodic pleas for death.

Bach's Easter cantata both continues and transcends this seventeenth-century heritage. An early work, its indefatigable elaboration of the chorale melody is a true culmination of the invention of Schein and Scheidt and their successors. At the same time, this is no mere 'working out' of a theme; rather it is a vivid portrayal of the truth of the resurrection creating a theatrical effect comparable only to Schütz. But Schütz achieved such results without the restrictions of a borrowed melody; Bach's greatness lies in his being able to write so dramatically while still wearing the manacles of a chorale.