
CONCERTS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Spring - Summer 2017

Tuesday 28 February 2017

1.10pm

City of Edinburgh Methodist Church

David Gerrard · harpsichord

Programme of works by J.S. BACH



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Partita No. 3 in A minor, BWV 827

Fantasia - Allemande - Corrente - Sarabande - Burlesca - Scherzo - Gigue

Suite in A major, BWV 832

Allemande - Air pour les Trompettes - Sarabande - Bourrée - Gigue

Prelude and Fugue in C major (WTC II), BWV 870

The six partitas of Clavier-Übung I were Bach's first published works, appearing in collected form in 1731, and given the designation 'Opus 1'. Written in the preceding six years, they were the last of his sets of keyboard suites, followed only by the Italian Concerto and French Overture (published as Clavier-Übung II in 1735).

Partita 3 in A minor is - at least initially - of a rather severe tone, with the unrelenting initial Fantasia a more brooding statement than either Partita 1's welcoming Praeludium, or the larger-scale openings found elsewhere. The spell is finally broken in the exuberant Burlesca, with its comic staccati and crass parallel octaves. In Anna Magdalena's 1725 notebook, this movement is simply labelled 'Menuet'; Bach's revised title for publication makes his intentions rather clearer. The burlesque spirit is carried into the Scherzo; at least to modern listeners, the hint of Scarlatti in both movements is unavoidable. The steely aspect of the opening re-emerges in the final movement, though - in light of the Burlesca and Scherzo - perhaps we sense some satire in the Gigue's arpeggiated hyperbole.

The Suite in A major BWV 832 is clearly a very early work, and its authenticity has often been questioned, with Telemann suggested as a plausible alternative author. However, several independent sources attribute it to Bach, with the first two movements (the Allemande and Air) included in the famous Möller

Manuscript in the hand of Johann Christoph Bach, Johann Sebastian's eldest brother and keyboard teacher. The movements are each convincingly characterised, and their straightforward affects belie a rigorous and relatively sophisticated construction. Johann Christoph was a pupil of Pachelbel, and this tradition is perhaps most apparent in the generous phrasing and symmetry of the opening Allemande.

The title of the Air pour les Trompettes is somewhat confusing; the movement is not a true trumpet tune in the French or English sense, with a chromatic melody far removed from natural brass. Indeed, the only literal reference occurs in the horn-call octaves towards the end, and perhaps the title instead evokes a particular organ registration, or implies a general familiarity with French theatrical scores. The swaggering Sarabande - certainly the most extraordinary element of the suite - combines a hint of the French overture with a truly adventurous harmonic design. A major was still an unusual choice of overall key at this point, making all the more remarkable Bach's excursion into C# minor (complete with passing diminished and Neapolitan chords) and raising interesting questions about the temperaments being tuned in the Bach home.

The harpsichord used in today's recital is by Joop Klinkhamer, Amsterdam, 1987 after North German originals. Temperament: Kirnberger III

David Gerrard is active as a performer, researcher and instrument maker. He graduated with double first-class honours in Music from the University of Oxford, followed by MMus Early Keyboard Performance studies at the University of Edinburgh. David has held appointments as organ scholar at both Canterbury Cathedral and Magdalen College, Oxford, and as the assistant organist at Paisley Abbey. Having worked extensively with the harpsichords and clavichords in Oxford's Bate Collection and Edinburgh's Russell and Mirrey Collections, he has given recitals on many significant historical instruments. Currently a tutor in the Reid School of Music, David is undertaking doctoral research (funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council), building early keyboard instruments, and performing with ensembles including the Dunedin Consort and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS:

Wednesday 1 March

2pm

Reid Concert Hall, Bristo Square

Tovey Memorial Prize Competition 2017 Final Round

The Tovey Memorial Prize is awarded annually to the Music student who shows the greatest promise in composition or performance

Admission Free

Friday 3 March

1.10pm

Playfair Library Hall, Old College, South Bridge

Anne Desler (mezzo-soprano) and John Kitchen (harpsichord)

Love Lost and Found

17th-century music for voice and basso continuo by composers including CACCINI, CARISSIMI, MERULA, MONTEVERDI, ROSSI and STROZZI

Admission Free

Tuesday 7 March

1.10pm

Methodist Church, Nicolson Square

The Edinburgh Quartet

HAYDN String Quartet Op.77 No.2 and works by University of Edinburgh composition students ANDREW BLAIR and ANDREW CARVEL

Admission Free

Friday 10 March

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall, Bristo Square

Kevin Duggan (organ)

FRESCOBALDI Toccata sesta

BUXTEHUDE Præludium in G minor *manualiter*

J.S. BACH Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr BWV 664

and works by TALLIS, GIBBONS, ZACH, KUCHAR and SAWA

Admission Free