
CONCERTS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Autumn - Winter 2017

Friday 13 October 2017

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

John Kitchen · organ

Programme of works by LÜBECK, BÖHM,
HANFF, REINCKEN and KREBS.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Praeambulum in E

Vincent Lübeck (c.1654–1740)

Lübeck was a highly-respected and much-admired Hamburg organist, a younger contemporary of the great Buxtehude, who (rather confusingly) made his career in the city of Lübeck. Vincent Lübeck presided over the Arp Schnitger organ in the church of St Cosmae, Stade, near Hamburg—an instrument still happily extant, splendidly restored and much recorded—and in 1702 he moved to the prestigious position of organist in the Nikolaikirche, Hamburg. This church had at that time one of the largest and most highly-developed organs in the world, also built by Schnitger, and on this great instrument Lübeck would have played (but more often improvised) pieces such as this praeambulum. Its plan and style are similar to many of Buxtehude's praeludia: a five-section movement which alternates toccata-like passages with two related fugues.

Capriccio in D

Georg Böhm (1661–1733)

Böhm was based in Lüneburg, whence the not yet 15-year-old Bach set out in 1700. There is no doubt that Bach learned a great deal from Böhm, although as far as we know he did not have formal lessons from him. (It seems that the teenage Bach soon became acquainted with all the Lüneburg organists, no doubt partly to gain access to their instruments!) Böhm's *Capriccio* seems to have had some influence on some of Bach's early multi-sectional toccatas—those which are generally thought of as harpsichord music, but have as much claim to be organ music.

Two organ chorales

Auf meinen lieben Gott

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott

Johann Nikolaus Hanff (1663–1711)

Hanff variously worked as an organist in Hamburg, Lübeck and latterly at the cathedral in Schleswig; sadly, he died only a few months after his appointment there. Like Lübeck and Reincken, Hanff left very few organ works, probably because they generally improvised. (We should remind ourselves that we have a large corpus of organ music by Bach only because either he or his students copied out many works as compositional models. Bach too would generally have improvised at the organ.) Hanff left only six organ chorales, of which we hear two, both in the Buxtehudian style with the chorale melody expressively ornamented in the treble,

and played on a solo registration. 'Auf meinen lieben Gott' is a gently reflective piece, the text speaking of having trust in God. 'Ein feste Burg' is of course Luther's stirring Reformation hymn, and particularly appropriate in 2017, the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. Today, Hanff's piece will be followed by a harmonisation of the melody by Samuel Scheidt (1587–1654).

Fuga in G minor

Johann Adam Reincken (1643–1722)

Until quite recently, the celebrated Hamburg organist and composer Reincken was thought to have been born in 1623, which was his birth date as given by the 18th-century writer, Mattheson. However, scholars are now convinced that he was born 20 years later, and that, after all, he did not live until the age of 99! He was nevertheless seen as a venerable figure in later life; the famous story about the young J.S. Bach impressing the elderly Reincken by his improvisation upon a chorale is well-known. This fugue, one of few organ pieces by Reincken to have survived, is characterised by a long, energetic fugue subject and an unstoppable rhythmic vitality—a real *moto perpetuo*.

Chorale variations: Jesu, meines Lebens Leben

Fantasia à gusto italiano

Praeludium et fuga in C

Johann Ludwig Krebs (1713–1780)

The short set of variations on *Jesu, meines Lebens Leben*, may not be by Krebs and is included in the *incerta* section of the modern complete edition. A fine, strong chorale melody is first set in four parts; then movements follow in two parts (*bicinium*) and three (*tricinium*). These may originally have been intended as interludes between the sung verses. I will add a final triumphant statement.

The beautifully expressive if enigmatically-named *Fantasia à gusto italiano* is unique in Krebs's output, and is reminiscent of a Bach aria, or perhaps a cello solo with continuo accompaniment. It may be a transcription, although we have no external evidence of this.

Finally, the *Praeludium et Fuga in C* is probably the best-known of his large-scale preludes and fugues—justifiably so, since it is a wonderfully vigorous piece. The prelude opens with brilliant manual passage-work, followed by a pedal solo (comparison with the opening of Bach's *Toccatà in C* BWV 564 is inevitable); the remainder of the prelude is grand, noble and imposing. The gigue-like fugue is irresistibly rumbustious, offering one or two harmonic surprises.

John Kitchen has now retired from teaching, and is an Honorary Fellow in the Reid School of Music. He continues as University Organist, as Director of the Edinburgh University Singers, and he will continue to be involved with the Raymond Russell Collection of Early Keyboard Instruments at St Cecilia's Hall and Museum in Edinburgh, now open again after a major refurbishment. John is also Director of Music at Old Saint Paul's Episcopal Church and Edinburgh City Organist with duties at the Usher Hall. He gives many solo recitals both in the UK and further afield, and also plays regularly with several ensembles, covering a wide range of musical styles. In addition, he is much in demand as a continuo player, accompanist, lecturer, writer, adjudicator and reviewer.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS:

Tuesday 17 October

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall, Bristo Square

The Edinburgh Quartet

MOZART String Quartet No. 20 in D major K499

RAVEL String Quartet in F major

Admission Free

Friday 20 October

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall, Bristo Square

Dorien Schouten (organ)

PRAETORIUS Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott

J.S. BACH Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit BWV 669

J.S. BACH Christe, aller Welt Trost BWV 670

J.S. BACH Kyrie, Gott Heiliger Geist BWV 671

J.S. BACH Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr BWV 676

SCHEIDEMANN Wir glauben all an einen Gott

TUNDER Jesus Christus, unser Heiland

Admission Free