



CONCERTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Week Commencing 14th November 2005



Friday 18 November

1.10pm

McEwan Hall

ROGER FISHER organ

Rheinberger
Steel

Sonata No. 11 in D minor, Op.148
Variations on a Theme of
Guillaume de Machaut, Op.65

Saturday 19 November

7.30pm

Reid Concert Hall

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY STRING ORCHESTRA
WILLIAM CONWAY conductor

Tickets: £6.00 (£4.00 concessions)

Ticket Information - 07879 877 668

ALL RECITALS AT 1.10pm ARE FREE AND ARE UNRESERVED

CONCERTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH 2005-6

Lunch-hour recital
McEwan Hall, Bristo Square, Teviot Place

FRIDAY 18 NOVEMBER at 1.10pm
(admission free)

ROGER FISHER *organ*

Sonata No. 11 in D minor, Op. 148

- I Agitato
- II Cantilene
- III Intermezzo
- IV Fuge

Josef Rheinberger
(1839-1901)

Rheinberger's name is indelibly associated with his twenty organ sonatas and other shorter organ pieces. These enjoyed a wide currency in Britain in the first half of the 20th century, due in no small measure to their advocacy by Harvey Grace, who wrote a monograph, *The Organ Works of Rheinberger*, in 1925; he also edited all the sonatas. By the 1960s and 70s these works were less often heard, but they are once again enjoying popularity. Rheinberger left also much very fine choral music, most of which has been little performed until recently. (You may have heard the concert of Rheinberger's choral works, including the splendid Mass in E flat, here in the McEwan Hall just a few weeks ago.)

The twenty organ sonatas, many of which are more like suites, were published between 1868 and 1900; No.11 in D minor dates from 1887. It begins with a dramatic and well-wrought *Agitato*; the *Cantilene* (in F major) which follows is a Romantic version of Bach's so-called 'Air on the G-string'. The *Intermezzo* plunges into D flat major and makes use of piano-like figurations; the musical material is heard in several keys and ultimately prepares for the return of D minor, the key of the final fugue. This begins relatively simply with a rather severe subject in minims, but the movement is characterised by a gradual increase in activity, some reminiscence of previous musical ideas, and further exploration of various keys. The fugue ends in an affirmative D major.

JK

Variations on a theme of Guillaume de Machaut Op. 65

Christopher Steel
(1939-1991)

Charles Christopher Steel was director of music of Bradfield College, Reading, until compelled to retire on health grounds. His compositions include major choral works, much church music, seven symphonies and a cello concerto and a number of organ works. His *Variations on a theme of Guillaume de Machaut* (Op.65), were commissioned by the North West Arts Association in 1981 at the request of Roger Fisher. The success of this commission led to two further commissions, from an organisation in



the Ruhr area of Germany, (Camerata Assyndia): *Variations, Toccata and Fugue on two Croatian Carols* (Op.82) and *Sinfonia for Organ and Strings* (Op.84).

The idea behind the *Variations on a theme of Machaut* arose from a book by Barbara Tuchmann called *A Distant Mirror* which compares the times in which Machaut lived (1300-1377) with the present day. The work opens with a simple presentation of the theme (the same theme that is used by Rheinberger in the middle movement of his 19th Sonata) and three variations representing the Troubadours and Trouvères. Variations 4 & 5 are entitled War, while variation six represents Courtly Love. The plague is vividly depicted in a virtuoso variation (No.7) entitled The Black Death, which is followed by a funeral Dirge (variation 8). As a contrast, variations 9 & 10 are entitled Pilgrimage and a walking motif is clearly to be heard. Variations 11 & 12, joyfully represent Feast Days and are followed by a bridge passage, leading to the finale, The Cathedral of Notre Dame. In the exalted mood of this variation it is, perhaps, not too fanciful to imagine that one hears not only the organ, but also the bells of the great cathedral where Machaut was choirmaster in the 14th century.

RF

ROGER FISHER was Organist and Master of the Choristers of Chester Cathedral for 29 years and left there in 1996 to concentrate on his career as a recitalist, teacher and adviser on organ construction. From 1997 to 2004 he was Features Editor of *Organists' Review*.

Born in Woodford, Essex, he was educated at Bancroft's School and studied at the Royal College of Music with Harold Darke and Herbert Howells, gaining his ARCM, FRCO and CHM diplomas and winning the Geoffrey Tankard Prize for Organ playing. In 1959 he was awarded an Organ Scholarship at Christ Church, Oxford which gave him the opportunity to study with Dr Sydney Watson, Dr Bernard Rose and Dr H. Kennedy Andrews. Having graduated at Oxford, he moved to Hereford, accepting the posts of Assistant Organist at the Cathedral and Assistant Lecturer in Music at the College of Education. During this period he studied the piano with Professor Claud Biggs and was closely involved with the Three Choirs Festival, acting as an assistant chorus master, organ soloist, and accompanist.

Upon completion of the rebuilt organ in 1970 at Chester, he embarked on the first of many BBC broadcasts and numerous recordings (including several for EMI, Decca and RCA) which have had world-wide sales. He has recorded, not only in the United Kingdom, but also in the USA, South Africa and Germany. Recently, as a pianist, he has collaborated with Gordon Pullin in an 8 CD set of *The English Tenor Repertoire*.

He tours frequently and extensively as a recitalist in Europe, Scandinavia, North America and South Africa, visiting Australia also in autumn 2004 and has a wide repertoire. He specialises in the music of Bach and of the Romantic Era. He is a keen pianist and gives piano recitals and concerto performances when time permits.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Saturday 19 November – 7.30pm – Reid Concert Hall
EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY STRING ORCHESTRA
WILLIAM CONWAY (conductor)
Tickets: £6.00 (£4.00 concessions) Ticket Information: 07879 877668

Tuesday 22 November – 1.10pm – Reid Concert Hall
SHARAT CHANDRA SRIVASTAVA (violin)
UTTAR HUSSAIN (tabla)
A concert of Indian Classical Music featuring afternoon Ragas.

Wednesday 23 November – 1.05pm – Glass Arcade, School of Agriculture, King's Buildings
EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY RENAISSANCE SINGERS
NOEL O'REGAN (director)
Music for St. Andrew, including works by Palestrina, Victoria and Gallus.

Thursday 24 November – 7.30pm – St Giles' Cathedral
EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CHAMBER CHOIR
ERIC von IBLER (conductor and organ)
The Royal Norwegian Advent Concert – music and carols for advent.

Friday 25 November – 1.10pm – Reid Concert Hall
JAMES JOHNSTONE (organ)
J.S. Bach

Friday 25 November – 7.30pm – Reid Concert Hall
EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY WIND BAN
MORVEN BELL (conductor)
Tickets: £5.00 (£3.00 concessions) Ticket Information: m.gillingwater@sms.ed.ac.uk

Saturday 26 November – 7.30pm – Reid Concert Hall
EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY MUSIC SOCIETY SINFONIA
TOM BUTLER (conductor)
JENNY DUCKETT (viola)
Martinu and Borodin
Tickets: £5.00 (£3.00 concessions) on the door.

Sunday 27 November – 8.00pm – Canongate Kirk
EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CHAMBER CHOIR
ERIC von IBLER (conductor) STUART HOPE (organ)
Mary Queen of Scots, Lassus, Guerrero, Palestrina, J.S. Bach and Hadley
Tickets: £6.00 (£4.00 concessions) Ticket Information: euchamberchoir@hotmail.com