

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH CONCERT SERIES SPRING · SUMMER 2011

Concerts at The University

Friday 4 March 2011

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Iain McLarty · organ

Programme of works by BUXTEHUDE, SWEELINCK,
SCHEIDT, KREBS and MENDELSSOHN.



Praeludium in G minor, BuxWV 149

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Buxtehude is best known to many as the organist whom Bach walked over 400 kilometres to hear. He was employed at the Marienkirche in Lübeck for most of his adult life and might have been succeeded there by Handel if he hadn't included a marriage to one of his seven daughters as part of the job offer. The Praeludium in G minor is in Buxtehude's favoured five-part form. After an improvisatory opening the prelude is revealed as an unsettled ground bass, with the pedal ground starting on the second beat of the bar and constant triplet semiquavers in the manuals driving the music forwards. Then come two fugues separated by a brief toccata-like section. The second fugue is given a sense of expansiveness and grandeur by a combination of triple time and dotted rhythms and leads into a concluding toccata section.

Echo Fantasia in A minor

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)

Despite never leaving his home in Amsterdam for more than a few days at a time, Sweelinck is often considered as the father of North German organ music due to his influence on many of the great composers of the Baroque period. He was appointed organist at the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam before he was eighteen and retained this post for the rest of his life. Due to Calvinist attitudes towards the use of instruments in worship, he was actually employed by the city as a civil servant and played for an hour before and after services rather than during them. He was renowned for his improvisation and the influence of this can be seen in many of his keyboard works, including the "Echo Fantasia".

Alamande: Also gehts also stehts

Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654)

This dance suite is from the *Tabulatura Nova*, one of the most significant collections of early keyboard music by a single composer. Scheidt had studied with Sweelinck and the collection combines the advanced keyboard technique he would have learned in Amsterdam with the liturgical demands of the Lutheran service. His chorale variations are a perfect example of this, with clearly defined verses that can be fitted into a liturgical context as required. "Also gehts also stehts" has a theme and seven variations. The theme is readily identifiable in all of these, with some merely providing it with an accompaniment while others ornament the theme itself and the last variation sets it in compound time with canonic entries.

O König, dessen Majestät

Johann Ludwig Krebs (1713-1780)

Krebs was a pupil of J.S. Bach at the Thomasschule in Leipzig and was evidently held in high regard as Bach wrote references for him as well as occasionally asking him to assist in the Thomaskirche while Krebs was studying law and philosophy at the University. His professional life was spent in various appointments south of Leipzig although he was keen to return to the town, applying for his teacher's position after his death. However, despite being the most accomplished organist he was unsuccessful as the Thomaskirche were looking for a Kantor rather than a Kapellmeister. The chorale prelude "O König, dessen Majestät" dates from his first professional appointment in Zwickau and although Krebs can be seen as a pre-Classical composer with influence of the galant style, the Baroque tradition is still very much in evidence here.

Organ Sonata in C minor, Op.65 No.2

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Mendelssohn's six organ Sonatas date from the last few years of his short life and demonstrate the mastery of compositional technique that had been apparent from a young age. Mendelssohn was well known in Britain by this point and these works were commissioned by an English publisher as a set of voluntaries. However, the condition of contemporary English pedalboards would have made them difficult to play at the time and Mendelssohn apparently refused to perform them in England. The title of sonata does not imply the strict form that this might have meant in the Classical period and they are varied in form, although all except the second incorporate a chorale. The second sonata is arguably the most traditional in structure with an almost symphonic pattern to its movements. The first movement is a weighty Grave which leads without a break into a more flowing Adagio. These minor movements are then contrasted by the move into the tonic major for the stately Allegro Maestoso and the concluding fugue.

I.M.

Iain McLarty has just completed a Masters in Musicology at the University of Edinburgh, with his particular interests being classical music and church music in Scotland. Before that he studied Maths and Music, a combination which led to him featuring in the film "Le pere di Adamo" by Italian director Guido Chiesa which was premièred at the Rome Film Festival. He is Herrick Bunney organ scholar at St Giles' Cathedral where he also sings with the choir and last year won the JS Anderson organ prize; the opportunity to give today's recital is part of that prize. His main focus is conducting and he has worked with most of the university groups with forthcoming concerts including the Chamber and String Orchestras as well as a new opera by composer Thomas Seltz. He is currently Sir Alexander Gibson conducting fellow with the RSNO Chorus and Musical Director of the Hutcheson's Choral Society.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS:

Tuesday 8 March

1.10pm, Reid Concert Hall

Andrew Zolinsky · piano

DEBUSSY Images, Book 2

UNSUK CHIN Etudes 1,3,4 & 6 from *Six Etudes*

CHOPIN Etude in C major Op.10 No.7

LIGETI Der Zaublerlehrling from *Etudes, Book 2*

CHOPIN Etude in E flat minor Op.10 No.6

LIGETI Fanfares from *Etudes, Book 1*

ADMISSION FREE

Thursday 10 March

7.45 pm, Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh

Edinburgh University Renaissance Singers

Noel O'Regan · director

Victoria in Context: music by TOMÁS LUIS DE VICTORIA and his contemporaries to mark the 400th anniversary of his death

TICKETS: £7.00 / £4.00 CONCESSIONS

available on the door

Friday 11 March

1.10pm, Reid Concert Hall

Sarah Nicolls · piano

RICHARD BARRETT Adrift (with Lauren Hayes · computer)

MICHAEL EDWARDS I believe the highest human achievement can be accomplished with a raging heart

ATAU TANAKA Suspensions

ADMISSION FREE