

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH CONCERT SERIES AUTUMN · WINTER 2011

Concerts at The University

Friday 25 November 2011

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Michael Bawtree · organ

Programme of works by ANDRIESEN, OORTMERSSEN,
SWEELINCK, J.S. BACH and ALBERT DE KLERK.



Theme and variations (1949)

Hendrik Andriessen (1892-1981)

Passacaglia in D minor BuxWV 161

Dieterich Buxtehude (c1637-1707)

Three choral preludes (1994)

Jacques van Oortmerssen (b. 1950)

(i) Psalm 72

(ii) Die Sünden sind vergeben

(iii) Ach, was soll ich Sünder machen?

Balletto del granduca

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)

Three organ chorales on 'Nun komm der Heiden Heiland'

BWV 659-661

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Variations on the sequence 'Laudes organi' (1980)

Albert De Klerk (1917-1998)

The music of the Netherlands forms the basis of today's recital. The undisputed 'father' of Dutch organ tradition, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck was a composer and organist whose work straddled the end of the Renaissance and beginning of the Baroque era. He was for forty-four years organist of Amsterdam's famous Oude Kerk. Most famous now for his many keyboard works, this short piece is a set of five highly decorative variations on the secular song, "Little dance of the Grand Duke".

Hendrik Andriessen was organist of the St Josephchurch in Haarlem from 1913 to 1934 and together with the Flemish musician Joseph de Klerk (father of Albert de Klerk) was responsible for the famous musical climate in this church. The tradition of Gregorian chant singing at this church was a source of inspiration for both Andriessen as Albert de Klerk. Hendrik Andriessen continued his church musical work in the cathedral of Utrecht, first as conductor-organist and later on as organist. In addition he taught at the conservatory of Utrecht, Amsterdam and The Hague. A generation younger than Andriessen, Albert de Klerk, was a boy soprano in the church choir of his father Joseph de Klerk in Haarlem. He became city organist of Haarlem, teacher at the Church music school in Utrecht and head organ teacher at the Amsterdam Conservatory. Besides writing organ and choir music for the Roman Catholic service, de Klerk also wrote chamber music. His compositions for chimes became widely known and he was internationally famous as an organ improviser. Written in 1949 and dedicated to Lady Susi Jeans, Andriessen's 'Thema met variaties' is in reality more of a rondo structure: a grand, neo-baroque statement opens the work, returning between quieter developments of the theme. De Klerk's four entertaining variations on the plainsong 'Laudes organi' are colourful and quirky. Jacques van Oortmerssen has continued the Dutch organ tradition, equally recognised as teacher, performer and composer. His 'Five Chorale Preludes' appeared in 1994; today's three all reflect Judgement and forgiveness of sins, and make extensive use of double pedalling.

Danish-born composer Dieterich Buxtehude was the father of the North German school of organ composition, a tradition which was later developed by Johann Sebastian Bach, who as a young man famously walked two hundred miles to meet and study with Buxtehude at Lübeck. Buxtehude's output for organ consists primarily of chorale-based works, toccatas and preludia. However, he did also compose two Chaconnes and today's Passacaglia, each using a repeating bass pattern. The D minor Passacaglia is one of Buxtehude's true masterpieces of form and pacing. There are four sections, each containing seven variations on the seven-note ostinato, exploring a total of three keys: the first section is in D minor, the second in F major, the third in A minor, and the fourth returns to D minor. Bach set the Advent plainsong 'Nun komm der Heilen Heiland' a number of times, both in organ works and cantatas. Today's three pieces come from the so-called 'Leipzig' or 'Eighteen' chorale preludes. In the first two, the chorale is found as an ornamented soprano line; the accompaniment to the first is a highly angular contrapuntal duet for two bass instruments, perhaps imitating a gamba or bassoon; the accompaniment to the second setting is more linear but harmonically more surprising; the third and final setting sees the chorale melody head to the pedals, over which builds an imitative toccata in the manuals.

Michael Bawtree studied music and the organ at Christ's College, Cambridge University and conducting at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. He is a prize-winning Fellow of the Royal College of Organists. Solo organ recital engagements have taken him to over twenty cathedrals across the United Kingdom, and to Bermuda, California, New England, New Zealand, Sweden and Denmark. He has also given recitals at the universities of Cambridge, Edinburgh, Harvard and Berkeley CA. For five years Michael Bawtree was Assistant Director of Music at St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Suffolk, and he is currently Director of Music at St Margaret's Episcopal Church in Glasgow. As organist with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, he has appeared at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Edinburgh International Festival, the BBC Proms and the Kelvingrove Museum for Saint-Saens' *Organ Symphony*.

Also active as a choir director and orchestral conductor, Michael Bawtree is Chorus Director of the Edinburgh Royal Choral Union, Music Director of the Glasgow Chamber Choir and assistant musical director of the Lyrique-en-Mer opera festival in Brittany. He has conducted the RSNO, the Orchestra of Scottish Opera, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the Edinburgh Festival Chorus, Northern Ballet and many performances of Scottish Ballet's productions of *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Nutcracker* across the UK. Michael has conducted performances of *Albert Herring* and *La Clemenza di Tito* for Edinburgh Studio Opera and worked in Brittany for productions of *Tosca*, *La Boheme*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Così fan tutte*, *Rigoletto* and *Don Pasquale*. He recently performed and recorded Alexander McCall Smith's chamber opera *Okavango Macbeth* at the Queen's Hall, recently released on Delphian Records. Recent and forthcoming engagements include springtime choral concerts in Holland and Germany, a midsummer visit to Orkney's St Magnus Festival, organ recitals at St Paul's Cathedral and Notre-Dame de Paris in September and concerts at the Bridgewater Hall, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall and the Usher Hall over Christmas.

FORTHCOMING CONCERT:

Saturday 26 November, 7.30pm

Reid Concert Hall

Edinburgh University Music Society Sinfonia

Michael Graham · conductor

NIELSEN Helios Overture Op. 17

SIBELIUS Karelia Suite Op. 11

Symphony No. 3 Op. 52

TICKETS: £6.00 / £4.00 concessions tickets @ eums.eusa.ed.ac.uk