
CONCERTS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Spring - Summer 2019

Friday 8 February 2019

1.10pm

McEwan Hall

John Kitchen · organ

Programme of works by DUPRÉ, DURUFLÉ and GUILMANT



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Cortège et Litanie Op. 19, No. 2

Marcel Dupré (1886–1971)

Dupré was internationally known as a recitalist, playing frequently in England and America, and he developed a reputation as a Bach player, performing the composer's complete organ works from memory in the 1920s. Dupré succeeded Widor at St Sulpice when Widor retired (aged 90) in 1934; he remained *titulaire* there for the rest of his life. Although a great improviser, Dupré also left a considerable legacy of organ music, much of it technically demanding. The *Cortège et Litanie* is relatively early, dating from 1922. It begins with the slow theme of the funeral cortège, played very quietly; soon we hear the repetitive theme of the litaney: an insistently repeated prayer. Gradually the dynamic builds up, until the great moment comes when Dupré combines the two themes, ultimately building up to a glorious full organ sound at the conclusion.

Méditation pour orgue

Maurice Duruflé (1902–1986)

This piece appeared in print only in 2001, but the music is familiar from the Agnus Dei of the *Messe 'Cum Jubilo'* of 1966. This is a liturgical mass-setting for baritone voices (singing a single plainsong-like line throughout) and organ. According to its editor Frédéric Blanc, the *Méditation* dates from 1964; he tells us that Duruflé was in the habit of playing this piece in the context of the liturgy. But it is not really clear which work came first; it could be that the *Méditation* began as an improvisation on ideas taken from the *Messe*. At all events, it is a restrained and effective movement, demonstrating well the composer's lush and distinctive harmonic idiom.

Sonata No. 5 in C minor Op. 80

Alexandre Guilmant (1837–1911)

- I Allegro appassionato
- II Adagio
- III Scherzo
- IV Recitativo
- V Choral et Fugue

According to Andrew Thomson (an authority on French Romantic organists and their music) Guilmant studied harmony at an early age, and then, in his teens, "set himself an unremitting regime of practice, composition and studying treatises"—surely an example to all music students. He quickly became a highly renowned player, and although based in Paris, travelled widely as a recitalist. In addition to his enormous output of organ music, he is remembered today as an indefatigable editor of 17th- and 18th-century French organ music; his editions met the highest scholarly standards of the time, and to this day some of the French Classical repertoire is available only in Guilmant's edition, the *Archives des Maîtres d'Orgue*.

His compositional output includes eight organ sonatas which, if not so original as those of Widor or Vierne, are very fine works. The fifth sonata which we hear today is one of the best. The first movement makes a bold, dramatic statement, and is followed by a gentle and rather sentimental adagio; in its final section the characteristic sound of *voix humaine et tremblant* is specified by the composer. The scherzo is vigorous, and in a kind of loose rondo form, with contrasting sections separating statements of the main musical material; it ends with a particularly dramatic cadence involving the use of a flattened supertonic chord (the 'Neapolitan') here unusually in root position. Following the example of César Franck's *Grande Pièce Symphonique*, the short recitativo recalls several themes from the first three movements, leading into the final choral and fugue. The choral is Guilmant's own, not a known melody, and the fugue develops a straightforward C major subject very effectively. Soon Guilmant reveals that the choral theme and fugue subject work together in counterpoint, and the remainder of the movement proceeds to demonstrate this most effectively. An enormous dominant pedal prepares for the final peroration.

JK

John Kitchen is an Honorary Fellow in the Reid School of Music, the University of Edinburgh. He is University Organist and is much involved with the Collections of Early Keyboard Instruments at St Cecilia's Hall; in summer 2018 he retired as conductor of the Edinburgh University Singers after 30 years. John is also Director of Music at Old Saint Paul's Episcopal Church and Edinburgh City Organist with performing and curatorial 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, tutor, lecturer, writer, adjudicator, reviewer and recording artist.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS:

Tuesday 12 February, 1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Reid Memorial Concert

Annemarie Klein (recorders)

Eric Thomas (theorbo)

Tom Wilkinson (harpsichord)

Works by GENERAL REID, DIEUPART,

JOHANN CHRISTOPH BACH and BARSANTI

Admission Free

Friday 15 February, 1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

David Gerrard (organ)

PACHELBEL Chaconne in D major

CABANILLES Tocata I de primero tono

Pasacalles II del I tono

PACHELBEL Chaconne in D minor

CABANILLES Tiento I de falsas primero tono

Tocata IV de quinto tono

PACHELBEL Chaconne in F minor

Admission Free

Tuesday 19 February, 1.10pm,

Reid Concert Hall

Sally Carr (soprano)

Calum Robertson (clarinets)

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS Three Vocalises

LORI LAITMAN The Secret Exit

MICHAEL NYMAN Manhatta for soprano and bass clarinet

MacMILLAN The Blacksmith and From Galloway

Admission Free

Friday 22 February, 1.10pm

St Cecilia's Hall

Emma Abbate and Julian Perkins (fortepiano duet)

MOZART Sonata for four hands in B flat major KV358

SCHUBERT Rondo in A major for piano four hands D951

WEBER Six pieces for four hands Op.3

Admission Free