

Derby & District Organists'

Registered Charity No. 510567

Association



The Organ of Merseburg Cathedral

Reubke and his Organ

Peter Williams

The third of this year's Derby Cathedral organ recitals, on July 15th, has a programme of music by composers intimately associated with particular organs or places:

- Präludium und Fuge (Op. 37, 1) - Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809-1847)
- Aria Sebaldina - Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)
- Sonata on the "94th Psalm" - Julius Reubke (1834-1858)
- Chant de Paix - Jean Langlais (1907-1991)
- Ballade en mode Phrygien - Jehan Alain (1911-1940)
- Variations on "America" - Charles Ives (1874-1954)
- Prélude et Fugue (Op. 7, 3) - Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)

Forthcoming Events

Monday 20th July 7.30pm
Evening Visit to Tibshelf and Somercotes

Saturday 12th September 2.30pm
Chairman's Event – Repton

N.B. The Mendelssohn Event at St Mary, Ilkeston will now be on Wednesday 14th October.

Tuesday 17th November 7.30pm
Annual General Meeting – St Werburgh, Spondon.

Derby Cathedral Organ Recitals

The summer series of recitals will be on Wednesdays at 7.45pm and will feature the music of Mendelssohn. Admission will be £10 for the Thomas Trotter recital and £5 for the others. Season tickets are £35 and are available in advance

Thomas Trotter	1 st July
Matthew Owens	8 th July
Peter Williams	15 th July
Robert Sharpe	22 nd July
Ian Tracey	29 th July
Peter Gould	5 th August
Tom Corfield	12 th August
Paul Hale	19 th August

Victoria Hall Hanley Saturdays 12 noon

Michael Rhodes	11 th July
Clive Driskill-Smith	22 nd August
Paul Prieto Ramirez	17 th October

Southwell Minster Wednesdays 7.30pm

Gabriel Dessauer	15 th July
Johann Hermanns	12 th August

Lichfield Cathedral

Francis Murton	27 th July
John Hoskin	10 th August

Albert Hall – Nottingham Sundays 2.45pm

Adam Brakel	19 th July
David Butterworth	9 th August
James Taylor	30 th August

The one exception to this is Mendelssohn who, although he appears to have given few formal recitals, 'organ crawled' wherever he could both in Germany and in England. However, he did profess an admiration for the organs of the Stumm brothers and played his sonatas for friends on the 1785 instrument in St. Ulrich at Neckargemünd. This instrument is described as having 'a bright melodious tone, slightly strident Principals, strong reeds, and narrow scaling,'¹ compared with Silbermann pipe scales.

Pachelbel was born in Nürnberg and worked in many German speaking cities including Vienna, Eisenach, Erfurt, Stuttgart, and Gotha, before returning to Sebalduskirche in Nürnberg where he was received enthusiastically. *Aria Sebaldina* is the last of a collection of six sets of variations called *Hexachordum Apollinis* - the six strings of Apollo - which were intended for domestic use on either harpsichord or chamber organ.

Of the others, Langlais often referred to his *Cavaillé-Coll* instrument in Sainte Clotilde as his 'mistress' although both he and Dupré were seasoned international performers and knew well the characteristics of English and American organs.² Jehan Alain, and his sister Marie-Claire, grew up with the uniquely eccentric instrument constantly under construction by their father, Albert, in their home at *Saint-Germain-en-Laye*. Charles Ives began his organ career at fourteen and first produced his iconoclastic *Variations on America* at the age of seventeen. The organs he seems to have known in particular were by the firm of *Hook and Hastings*.

However, the most remarkable instrument connected with any of the works in the programme is that associated with Julius Reubke's *Grosse Orgel-Sonata in C-moll (Der 94. Psalm)* to quote the title page of the first edition. This is the organ completed in 1855 by Friedrich Ladegast for Merseburg Cathedral - a complete rebuild of the 1666 instrument of 28 stops. This was an instrument much admired by Liszt upon which the first performances of his *Fantasy and Fugue on "Ad nos, ad salutarem undam"* and later, the

Prelude and Fugue on BACH, were performed by his pupil Alexander Winterberger, with Liszt himself assisting at the console. Much later, Max Reger's 2nd *Sonata* was also given its first performance there in 1902.³ The youthful Reubke, another of Liszt's pupils, performed his Organ Sonata on this mammoth instrument in 1857, dying from tuberculosis a year later aged just 24.

In 1871 the composer's younger brother Otto published his edition with the following preface:

'In the execution of this sonata, much emphasis must be placed on the correct choice and mix of the individual stops. For a perfect performance, an organ with at least 3 manuals is needed. More specific details on the complete (choice of) stops was not advisable, because the difference between organs with regard to the selection of stops is too great, and even stops labelled identically do not always produce the same effect on the different instruments. The term for individual stops without the added word 'alone' only serves to indicate that the character of the stop listed should be dominant in conjunction with others.'⁶

It is this edition, reprinted from the original plates by Bosworth & Co., which I shall be using on July 15th. It is a tragedy that the original autograph of the sonata has been lost so there is no firm evidence that the scheme shown below was the composer's original intention. Because Otto's edition was for a 3 manual instrument there is a discrepancy between the manual indications in the score and those shown in the Merseburg specification.

Reubke manages his structure by means of *cyclic* form or *thematic metamorphosis* where the opening theme, heard on the pedals, is transformed time and time again and is present on almost every line of music. There is not the space to give a detailed thematic analysis here but, apart from a little overindulgence in the *Adagio*, the music is tightly organised and rewarding both to play and listen to.

Amidst all the chromatic harmony the chord of the dominant minor 9th (ex. 1) features quite strongly and is used to introduce several of the sections:



Ex.1

The text printed below is a translation from the German that appears at the end of each section:

Grave; Larghetto

O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; thou God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.

Arise, thou judge of the world: and reward the proud after their deserving.

Allegro con fuoco

Lord, how long shall the ungodly, how long shall the ungodly triumph?

They murder the widow and stranger, and put the fatherless to death.

And yet they say, Tush, the Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

Adagio

If the Lord had not helped me: it had not failed but my soul had been put to silence.

In the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart: thy comforts have refreshed my soul.

Allegro

But the Lord is my refuge; and my God is the strength of my confidence.

And he shall recompense them their wickedness, and destroy them off in their own malice:

yea, the Lord our God shall destroy them.

For the English organist there are some matters of registration and interpretation to consider. In his edition, Otto Reubke gives a number of registration hints and instructions from the outset. The *Grave* calls for a 'gloomy' 8ft manual sound whilst making the theme on the pedals somewhat prominent. The *crescendo* in bar 5, and the *decrescendo* in bar 7, would be managed by a *registrant* operating a hand-stop! As can be seen, from bar 1, there are also pedalling indications from time to time.

(See example 2 on page 3.)

Ex. 2

Grave

Manual M. III. 8' *pp* *düster*

Pedal *p* *etwas hervortretend.*

Manual stärker und heller werdend *decesc.*

Ex. 3

nach und nach schneller

ohne Mixturen

M. I *f*

Pedalcoppel

Pedal *nach und nach immer stärker durch die andern Bässer*

A study of the specification reveals that there was only one enclosed section - the Brustwerke - most *crescendi* and *decrescendi* being managed by the addition or subtraction of stops by means of ventils. Friedrich Ladegast had worked with Cavallé-Coll in Paris and gradually adopted some of the French master's innovations throughout his career. However, at Merseburg, his first large instrument, he did not install Barker lever (this was added later by another builder) or the stop-crescendo he used on later instruments. He also completely rejected pneumatic action, although this was adopted by his son, Oskar after 1890¹. This makes the action extremely heavy.

At the end of the *Grave* Reubke asks for the descending *pppp* chromatic scale to be played on *Flöte oder Harmoniker 8' allein*. The *Harmoniker* is 'a small-scaled flute/string hybrid of 8' pitch, having a soft, bright tone. It is usually made of wood, bearded (according to Wedgwood), and sometimes slightly pyramidal (according to Audsley)². It is peculiar to German organ builders of this period and Sumner describes its tone as 'a delicate combination of flute and string'⁵. Incidentally there

is no *Harmoniker* on the Merseburg instrument!

The transition between the following *Larghetto* and the *Allegro con fuoco* is brought about by a powerful *cadenza* where the speed of the music gradually increases as well as the number of stops. The instruction at the beginning of this passage is: '*ohne Mixturen!*' The music is peppered with detailed markings which need to be explained. (Ex. 3)

As well as the overall *crescendo* each chromatic arpeggio has a hairpin attached to it together with ties to the next chord. This holding of notes in arpeggios is a common technique in German romantic organ and piano music - Reubke was one of Liszt's pupils - and is used throughout this sonata, often with different indications, to cause short *crescendi*. The *diminuendo* hairpin is brought about by the fall in pitch! This is all played on an uncoupled *Hauptwerk*, or *Great organ*. (Ex. 4)

In the *Adagio* Reubke has one of the melodies on an *Oboe*. On German romantic organs this is a very different sound from that of French or English instruments as it is a 'free

reed'^{4&5}

On the Merseburg organ it is on the *Rückpositiv* not the *Recit* or *Swell* of French or English instruments. Also mentioned is the *Aeoline 16'*. This is not a string stop but a very soft and thin-sounding 'free reed'.

The dynamic indications range from *pppp* to *fff*. Fast semiquaver passages are directed to be played on uncoupled manuals whilst *fff* passages call for couplers.

Friedrich Ladegast seems to have been quite a conservative continuing with slider chests 'long after most of his contemporaries were occupied with the development of the cone-chest. "It's not that I am against cone-chests" he wrote, "but we don't build them. Reeds do not sound well on them and staccato playing is impossible".⁷

Well, there is much call for *staccato* playing throughout this sonata and a variety of signs from wedge-shaped *staccatissimo* through *staccato* dots to *detaché* markings.

Members who would like to explore this topic further can find articles of interest by Carole Terry in the May

weniger stark und ruhiger

M. II *f* NB. R.H. L.H.

starke Bässe und Pedalcoppel fort
(strong basses and pedal couplers off)

N.B. Alle Toner des gebrochen Accordes, soweit es die Applicatur erlaubt, bleiben liegen.
(All the notes of the broken chords, as long as the method allows, should remain down.)

2005 edition of *Organists' Review*, and Robert Houssart in the May 2008 edition, as well as much material on the Internet.

There is also a very good Urtext edition published by Schott/Universal (UT 50243) but the best way of appreciating this music, on the instrument for which it was intended, is to listen to Michael Schönheit on MDG 606 1427-2 produced by the excellent Dabringhaus und Grimm.

The overall sound is that of a rich *pleno* which is coloured but not dominated by the reeds - there are no tubas! There are also many beautiful soft colours which are ideal for the music of this young romantic composer.

Peter Williams

¹ Richard Kassel *The Organ: An Encyclopedia* pub. Routledge

² Michael Murray *French masters of the Organ* pub. Yale University Press

³ Axel Schröter *Notes to MDG 606 1427-2*

⁴ Edward L. Stauff *Encyclopedia of Organ Stops* (Internet)

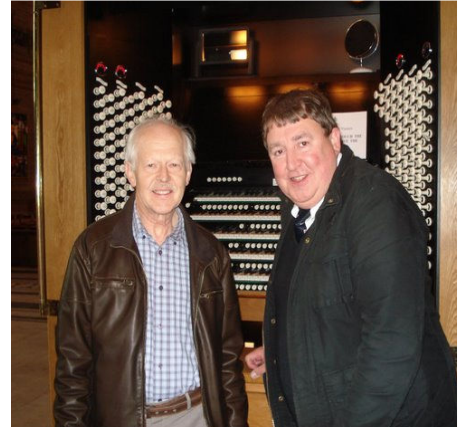
⁵ William Leslie Sumner *The Organ* pub. Macdonald & Co.

⁶ Trans. by Sibyl Marquardt from *Reubke Orgelwerke* ed. Günther Kauzinger pub. Schott/Universal

⁷ Chris Bragg in a Naxos review of MDG 606 1427-2

The Ladegast Organ in Merseburg Cathedral

Pedal		Oktave	2	Flauto Amabile	8
Untersatz	32	Mixtur	1 ^{1/3} IV	Gedackt	8
Prinzipal	16	Kornet	II-IV	Oktave	4
Salizet	16	Oboe	8	Gemshorn	4
Subbass	16			Rohrflöte	4
Violon	16	Hauptwerk II		Quinte	2 ^{2/3}
Grossnasard	10 ^{2/3}	Bordun	(Ten C) 32	Waldflöte	2
Oktave	8	Prinzipal	16	Terz	1 ^{3/5}
Bassflöte	8	Bordun	16	Sifflöte	1
Violoncello	8	Prinzipal	8	Mixtur	IV
Terz	6 ^{2/3}	Hohlflöte	8	Scalmey	8
Rohrquinte	5 ^{1/3}	Gemshorn	8	Stahlspiel	8
Oktave	4	Gamba	8		(Cylindrical Glockenspiel)
Mixtur	IV	Doppelflöte	8		
Kornett	IV	Qunte	5 ^{1/3}	Brustwerke IV (Enclosed)	
Posaune	32	Oktave	4	Lieulich Gedackt	16
Posaune	16	Spitzflöte	4	Geigenprinzipal	8
Dulzian	16	Gedackt	4	Flauto Dolce	8
Trompete	8	Quinte	2 ^{2/3}	Salizional	8
Klarine	4	Oktave	2	Unda Maris	8
RP/Pedal		Doublette	4'+2'	Lieulich Gedackt	8
HW/Pedal		Mixtur	2'	Oktave	4
OW/Pedal		Scharff	1'	Zarflöte	4
		Kornet	2 ^{2/3} III-V	Nasard	2 ^{2/3}
		Fagott	16	Oktave	2
		Trompete	8	Cymbal	III
Rückpositiv I				Progressio Harmonica	II-IV
Bordun	16			Aeoline	16
Prinzipal	8				
Flauta Traverso	8				
Gamba	8				
Quintatön	8	Oberwerk III			
Prinzipal	4	Quintatön	16	Manual compass:	56 notes C-g ³
Gedackt	4	Rohrflöte	8	Pedal compass:	27 notes C-d ¹
		Viola di Gamba	8		



Members Recital – St James' Riddings

An audience of some forty five gathered at St James' Church, Riddings, to hear the first members' recital for a number of years. We were welcomed by the Reverend Frank Mercurio (from St Louis, Missouri!) and Ron Sherwood; Stephen Johns, who organised the event, engaged the audience in his usual, genial way and acted as compere for the evening, allowing the performers to concentrate on their nerves.

The Riddings organ (Bevington / Blackett and Howden / Henry Groves) has 36 speaking stops and sounds well in the pleasantly resonant building. As there are no playing aids at all, most players needed the assistance of a registrant.

Tony Westerman opened the programme with a spirited performance of the Dubois Toccata in G, No. 3 of Douze Pièce, and was followed by David Wells (above). David offered two pieces by Buxtehude: Ciacona in E minor and the Chorale Variations on *Nun lob mein Seel' den Herr'n*, both of which enabled David to explore the quieter stops on the organ, particularly the Vox Humana which he used to contrast the soft flutes used in the variations; articulation and phrasing were clear and precise. Most of us are probably familiar with the Ciacona but the variations were new to me (DL) and I shall be looking for a copy from which to learn them in the near future.

David Bott returned us to the twentieth century with three pieces from Jean Langlais' Organ Book - Pastoral Song, Epithalamium and Pasticcio. There was a brief hiatus when David found himself to be 'optically challenged' as he had left his glasses in the car. However, upon his return to the console his playing was

assured, with the acerbic tonalities of Langlais complemented by well-chosen registrations. David (above) created a great sense of tranquillity in the Epithalamium (a wedding song) though it would be a very 'switched-on' bride who would request it for her wedding!

Three short chorale preludes on *Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend* by Walter opened Laurence Rogers' contribution to the evening; these were followed by Bach's Prelude and Fugue in A. Laurence's choruses in the Bach were well balanced and the playing was assured, as indeed it was in the Walter. His final piece, Fanfare Sortie by JB Mallechaud, was new to most members of the audience and in a style reminiscent of Lefebvre-Wely. (When I (DL) first saw this I wondered if it was a made-up name as Mallechaud translates as 'hot stitch' and is only an accent away from the name of a mustard manufacturer of Dijon!)

Everyone was impressed with the clean playing and well-chosen registrations of Gillian Chatto who gave a magisterial performance of *Offertoire sur les Grands Jeux* from Couperin's *Messe pour les Couvent*. The Riddings organ is very good for music from the French School of that period with the fiery, Great Trumpet creating a very creditable 'French' sound. Gillian also played the 'Little' Prelude and Fugue in E min by Bach, which was clearly articulated.

The evening was brought to an exciting conclusion with Tony Westerman's scintillating performance of Garth Edmunson's Toccata-Prelude on *Vom Himmel Hoch*.

We are indebted to the Rev Mercurio and the PCC of St James' For allowing us to use the church for our event, and, most particularly, we Thank Mrs Megan Allsopp for opening the church on numerous occasions to allow the performers to practise.



(Laurence Rogers, top ; Gillian Chatto above; Tony Westerman below.)



Thanks are also due to the ladies of the church who provided refreshments afterwards.

Terry Bennet / Denis Littleton

Flower Festival Friday 24th – Sunday 26th July

Members have been invited to play during the St James' Flower Festival and will enjoy exploring the wide range of quiet stops on the Riddings organ. If you are able to contribute your time and skill, please contact David Coates, the resident organist at St James', and negotiate a time with him. David can be contacted on: 01773 812637

The church will be open from 10.00am – 4.00pm on Friday and Saturday, and on Sunday from 10.30am – 4.30pm



Ben Bloor at the console of Derby Cathedral's Compton organ.

8.00pm. However, if there are several people travelling from the Derby area, it may be possible to pick people up at an arranged point.

For those not going to the recital, Eddie is hoping that his cousin, Frank Doran, a former Lord Mayor of Liverpool, will be available to show people the civic buildings, Beatles Museum and shopping areas.

Eddie can be contacted on: eddiebestwick@aol.com

Organ Playing - The Future

Although it has not been the practice in the Newsletter to review concerts, I attended one in the cathedral in which I think members would be interested.

The cathedral music staff have organised a series of lunchtime concerts to raise money for the building fund. The concert on the 12th June was given by Ben Bloor, the organ scholar at the cathedral and the youngest member of the Association, his Derby Grammar School teacher, Deborah Lamley, and fellow student, Jack Dring.

Ben performed as either soloist or accompanist in each piece in the fifty minute programme, which included pieces ranging from Buxtehude through to Mathias. Members who attend the annual series of organ recitals in the cathedral will recognise Ben as the young man who turns pages for the recitalists.

The audience of over 50 proved to be an appreciative one. Ben played with an easy self-assurance that allowed him to concentrate successfully on style, articulation and stop control. Make no mistake, ladies and gentlemen, this is a performer of considerable talent.

In the *Bridge Adagio in E major and Cathedrales* by Vierne, Ben demonstrated that his management of the considerable tonal forces of the Compton organ was a good match for his keyboard skill, resulting in very convincing performances of both

pieces. The easy manner in which Ben introduced each piece suggests a developing dry wit which will also appeal to future audiences.

It was nice to have a programme of organ music lifted by the contribution of other musicians. Deborah Lamley sang *With Doubtful Feet* and *With Plaintive Notes* from Handel's *Samson*. Ms Lamley has a pleasing, beautifully modulated voice which suited the sensitive requirements of the two pieces. Jack Dring, who is a member of the National Youth Jazz Orchestra played more Handel - an arrangement of *The Trumpet Shall Sound*.

At a time when members are concerned about where the next generation of organists is to come from it is comforting to see that at Derby cathedral the future looks good.

TW

Leicester Association visit to Liverpool – 17th October

Eddie Bestwick of the Leicester Association is organising a coach trip to Liverpool for the Anniversary Recital in the Anglican Cathedral. Like our own visit, the trip is open to anyone wishing to avail themselves of the cheap transport.

The provisional cost of the coach is £15 and at the time of going to press there are twenty seats available.

The coach will leave Stoney Stanton, near Hinckley, at 8.00am and is expected to return there at

DDOA Secretary

Siann Hurt, who has been the Association secretary for almost 7 years, wishes to stand down at the end of the year, creating a vacancy which will be voted upon at the AGM in November. Siann has devoted a considerable amount of time to the Association and her painstaking work, which has made so many of our events run smoothly, has been much appreciated by members of the committee.

Siann has combined the roles of Secretary and Membership Secretary though it is likely that these roles will be separated at the AGM, with committee members taking over some of the organisational responsibilities for events, thus easing the burden for the next holder of the post.

Siann's contribution to the Association has been considerable: the posting of the Newsletter has been done by Siann for the last 15 years; Siann has also been Membership Secretary since 1998.

If you feel that you would be able to contribute to the organisation of the Association by taking on some of Siann's responsibilities and would like to know more about what the post entails, please contact Siann at: mail@derbyorganists.co.uk

TW

Erratum

Apologies to Willis and Mark Garrat: in the last edition of the Newsletter I listed the drivers as 'Willis and Garrett'.

TW