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CLASSICS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
The Complete Organ Works, Vol. 6
DAVID GOODE
Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge

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BACH, BEAUTY AND BELIEF

THE ORGAN WORKS OF J.S. BACH

Introduction – Bach and the Organ

The organ loomed large from early on in Bach's life. The foundations of his multifaceted career as a professional musician were clearly laid in the careful cultivation of Bach's prodigious talent as an organist whilst he was still a child. Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach in 1685, and after the death of his father – the director of municipal music in the town – at the age of ten moved to Ohrdruf, where he was taken in by his eldest brother, Johann Christoph. Christoph was the organist at St Michael's Ohrdruf and had been taught by Pachelbel.¹ During his years at Ohrdruf, the young Sebastian was a choral scholar and likely had his first experiences in organ building and maintenance.² In 1700 he moved to Lüneburg, as a choral scholar at St Michael's School; this move brought him into the orbit of many organists, including Georg Böhm and Adam Reinken in Hamburg.³ 1703 found him examining a new organ at the New Church in Arnstadt, where he was appointed as organist in August of that year, remaining for four years, his first major professional organist post (Wolff 2001 p. 526). Clearly showing remarkable talent as a player from an early age, Bach's career remained founded upon the organ even as he moved around in a variety of posts after leaving Arnstadt in 1707: as the organist

¹ Peter Williams, *J.S. Bach: A Life in Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 9.

² Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 37.

³ Wolff, *Learned Musician*, p. 525.

of St Blasius's in Mühlhausen (1707 – 1708), court organist and chamber musician at Weimar (1708 – 1717), capellmeister at Cöthen (1717 – 1723) and cantor at St Thomas' Church in Leipzig (1723 – 1750).

'The Complete Organ Works of Bach'

Given that strong foundation, it is no surprise that organ music flowed from Bach's pen throughout his life. Yet how do Bach's organ works cohere? For the monolithic notion of 'The Complete Organ Works of Bach' is misleading. The picture is more fluid, even unclear, both as to the veracity of individual works and of their particular chronology. The impression is of a combination of works that have reached us in their present form through an often uncertain process of revision and collection (such as the *Six Sonatas*, BWV 525 – 530) and those with a more definite origin and/or date, such as *Clavierübung III*, which was published in 1739. Even a collection with a clear didactic purpose that is apparently easy to date like the *Orgelbüchlein*, BWV 599 – 644 (its title page is dated to 1722 or 1723)⁴ can remain opaque in the chronology and detail of its contents: the title page was added later than the chorales it contains (Williams 2003 p. 227). Many of the preludes and fugues do not exist in autograph form, a fact that in most cases does not affect the question of authorship as much as that of the date of composition, although the authorship of some organ works previously assumed to have been by Bach have been called into question, like the *Eight Short Preludes and Fugues*, BWV 553 – 560. Others are easier by

⁴ See Peter Williams, *The Organ Music of J.S. Bach*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 227.

virtue of their singularity either to ascribe authorship to, such as the Passacaglia, BWV 582, or to date, such as the Concerto Transcriptions, BWV 592 – 596, which are from Bach's Weimar years (Williams 2003 p. 202). However, the fluidity of the corpus is not as interesting – or as significant – as the stylistic and generic variety it exhibits.

Genres, Styles and Influences

Bach's organ works are characterised, typically for the composer, by a multiplicity of genres and stylistic influences. Broadly they can be categorised into five areas, though inevitably these overlap: chorale-based works (preludes, partitas, variations, trios); the *Six Sonatas*; preludes/toccatas/fantasias (including the Passacaglia) and fugues (paired together, and single); transcriptions of works by other composers (concertos, trios, etc.); miscellaneous works (Allabreve, Canzona, Pièce D'Orgue, etc.). Williams catalogues the multifarious stylistic influences on Bach's organ works.⁵ Many of these are traceable to other contemporary German organ composers whose compositional style Bach would almost certainly have known. As Williams states, these would have included Pachelbel, Böhm, Buxtehude, Bruhns, Reinken, Kerl and Froberger. Bach's organ works also frequently betray a French influence, both specifically, such as in the famous example of the Passacaglia, BWV 582, the first half of whose main theme originates in a piece by Raison, and more generically, such as in the C minor Fantasia, BWV 562 with its stylistic debt to French composers such as de Grigny. In addition,

⁵ See Peter Williams, *Bach Organ Music* (London: BBC Music Guides, 1972), p. 9.

an Italian influence is often felt in the manual writing across-the-board from the quasi-string writing in the *Six Sonatas* to the tripartite Toccata in C, BWV 564 via the Frescobaldian Canzona, BWV 588 and Corellian Allabreve, BWV 589.

Purposes

As the above discussion suggests, it is not surprising that many of the exact original purposes for the organ works remain unknown, though in general terms the following categories of use can be discerned: liturgical (many, if not most, of the chorales and chorale preludes; some of the prelude/toccatas and fugue pairs); didactic (the *Six Sonatas*; the *Orgelbüchlein*); stylistic assimilation (the concerto transcriptions; some toccatas and fantasias; Legrenzi and Corelli Fugues). In addition, collections such as *Clavierübung III* and perhaps the *Schübler Chorales* had a purpose that transcended their immediate utility: the desire to offer a musical-theological compendium (*Clavierübung III*), or leave a musical legacy (*Schübler Chorales*).

A Note on Current Bach Scholarship

Such is the scope of Bach's organ works. But how have they been covered in the literature? There is a fascinating dialectic evident in current Bach studies more broadly between a hermeneutic taken up with purely musical concerns for Bach's works,⁶ and a broader analytical approach to his music that seeks to contextualize Bach's contrapuntal, figurative and harmonic

⁶ The work of Peter Williams is helpful in this regard. See Peter Williams, *The Organ Music of J.S. Bach*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Peter Williams, *J.S. Bach: A Life in Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

peculiarities and complexities within a much broader framework involving contemporary theology,⁷ aesthetics,⁸ philosophy,⁹ and science.¹⁰ Assessing these different approaches to Bach's music is difficult, as the results are inevitably mixed. On the one hand, there is a need to maintain a degree of musical integrity by allowing the musical features of Bach's compositions to come first in any attempt to understand them. Thus, some of the least convincing musical-analytical work done from the contextual side arises from an approach to Bach's music that is too superficial. On the other hand, there is a sense in some of the 'music-only' approaches that *any* recourse to relevant external and contextual questions ought to be dismissed out of hand when clearly such factors occasionally – perhaps often – played a legitimate role in Bach's compositional process. The ideal, then, seems to be to take an approach to describing Bach's organ music that both honours the music itself whilst allowing for wider contextual questions to shape one's thinking as appropriate, perhaps on a piece-by-piece basis. With that

7 Eric Chafe, *Analyzing Bach Cantatas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Anne Leahy, "'Vor deinen Thron tret ich": The Eschatological Significance of the Chorale Settings of the P271 Manuscript of the Berlin Staatsbibliothek' in *Bach*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2006), pp. 81 – 118; Timothy A. Smith, 'Fugues Without Words: A Hearing of Four Fugues from "The Well Tempered Clavier" as Passion Music' in *Bach*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2009), pp. 45 – 66; Linda Gingrich, 'Hidden Allegory in J.S. Bach's 1724 Trinity Season Chorale Cantatas' in *The Choral Journal*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (August 2010), pp. 6 – 17.

8 Christoph Wolff, 'Bach and the Idea of "Musical Perfection"' in Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

9 See John Butt, 'A mind unconscious that it is calculating'? Bach and the rationalist philosophy of Wolff, Leibniz and Spinoza' in John Butt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

10 David Yearsley, *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

in mind, there seem to be two broad extra-musical contexts of particular relevance to the organ music of Bach in which purely musical observations can be worked out. These are *theology*, and *aesthetics*.

Theological Aesthetics

Peter Williams highlights a conundrum that needs tackling if one is to think theologically about Bach's organ music, namely the tension that exists between Bach's stated theological intention in composition (most famously revealed in the composer's signature 'S.D.G.' – 'Soli Deo Gloria' (To God Alone Be Glory) – that has been found on some of Bach's manuscripts, penned after the final bars) and the apparent self-interestedness of much of Bach's music.¹¹ The key that unlocks this dilemma is the observation made by John Butt,¹² that for Bach, as for other Lutherans, music was *intrinsically* of eternal value. We can be more specific and outline two ways in which the inherent theological nature of music, as it was understood, appears to have influenced the music Bach actually wrote.

i) Music as Theological Metaphor

A theological idea that was found in the Leipzig circles in which Bach moved in the 1740s was that God's beauty can be conceived conceptually as a type of *harmonia*:

God is a harmonic being. All harmony originates from his

11 See Williams, *Bach Organ Music*, pp. 10-11.

12 See John Butt, 'Bach's metaphysics of music' in Butt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bach*, p. 53.

wise order and organization... Where there is no conformity, there is also no order, no beauty, and no perfection. For beauty and perfection consists in the conformity of diversity.¹³

This fundamental idea of God's beauty as expressed in His unity-in-diversity immediately invites the metaphorical projection of this concept onto His creation: His beauty is expressed through His creation via the same aesthetic of unity-in-diversity. While criticisms have been levelled at this definition of beauty when held as an absolute value, as an explanation of Bach's contrapuntal practice it is highly suggestive. This desire for art to imitate nature in its perfection motivated Bach's musical project throughout his career and is particularly evident in his treatment of counterpoint: '[c]haracteristic of Bach's manner of composing is a way of elaborating the musical ideas so as to penetrate the material deeply and exhaustively.'¹⁴ Bach's maximization of thematic coherence, harmonic richness, and contrapuntal complexity can be thus understood as having a *theological* rationale. This rationale perhaps best fits the music with which there is no accompanying text to direct one's interpretation of the musical figures, and is particularly relevant in grasping the aesthetic behind specifically contrapuntal projects like *The Art of Fugue*.

13 Georg Vensky, 1742. Like Bach, Vensky was a member of Lorenz Christoph Mizler's Society for Musical Science. Quoted in Wolff, *Learned Musician*, p. 466.

14 Wolff, *Learned Musician*, p. 469.

ii) *Music designed to move the Affections towards God*

Ever since the discovery of Bach's personal Bible commentary, the so-called 'Calov Bible', it has often been noted that Bach's music appears to have been intended as an expression of a specifically, and personally-held, *Lutheran* faith.¹⁵ The implications of this in seeking an informed speculation of Bach's theological views of music are significant. For the indications in Luther's writings are not only that he saw music as inherently theological on a number of different levels,¹⁶ but specifically that he saw music as having a role in moving the believer's affections towards God, and thus an ability to strengthen the believer's faith in Christ.¹⁷ Combining this insight with the commonly-observed (though not unchallenged) evidence of the Baroque *Affektenlehre* (or 'Doctrine of the Affections') in Bach's music, it can be seen how often Bach's sacred music (chorale-based or liturgically-intended; often both) makes its spiritual utility felt through its projection of a relevant and (sometimes) dominant *affekt*. This primary *affekt* is then projected through the musical material, itself often consisting of harmonic and motivic workings-out of a single *inventio*, or dominant musical figure.¹⁸ In the organ

15 See Robin A. Leaver, 'Music and Lutheranism' in Butt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bach*, pp. 39 – 40.

16 Robin A. Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

17 See Luther's directions to believers suffering depression: 'When you are sad, therefore, and when melancholy threatens to get the upper hand, say: "Arise! I must play a song unto the Lord on my regal [...]" Then begin striking the keys and singing in accompaniment, as David and Elisha did, until your sad thoughts vanish.' Martin Luther, Theodore G. Tappert (ed.), *Letters of Spiritual Counsel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006) p. 97.

18 Laurence Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

music, this notion is perhaps most useful in approaching the chorale preludes – a genre that covers many of the organ works – where in many cases the background text, where clear, often illuminates both the general *affekt* of a given prelude, and the specificity of particular harmonies and figurations that have been chosen to illustrate it.

Conclusion – Bach, Beauty and Belief

Although the label of ‘The Complete Organ Works of Bach’ for the corpus is a misnomer, there are still many varied ways in which to view it coherently; theological aesthetics is just one example. Theology and aesthetics combine throughout Bach’s organ music, uniting them as works that project a Christian Lutheran worldview through their specifically musical beauty. In this they serve as exemplars of the theology of another towering eighteenth-century Christian intellect, whose published thought also combined beauty and belief with an emphasis on the affections of the believer: the American pastor Jonathan Edwards, with whom Bach has once been compared.¹⁹ Edwards placed the affections-of-the-heart at the centre of his definition of genuine Christian experience, and thus taught that moving them God-ward was the primary aim of any means of grace in the church, whether preaching or music. As examples of Edward’s affection-driven theology in practice, the organ works of Bach clearly cohere in their common ability to promote both belief and beauty, or perhaps more accurately, belief *through* beauty.

¹⁹ Richard A. Spurgeon Hall, ‘Bach and Edwards on the Religious Affections’ in *Johan Sebastian: A Tercentenary Celebration*, ed. Seymour L. Benstock (Westport: Greenwood Press), pp. 69 – 81.

Bach at Christmas

This disc seeks to bring together pieces among Bach’s organ music that refer implicitly or explicitly to Christmas. All the chorales are those associated liturgically and theologically with Christmastide, and the disc includes works such as the ‘Pastorella’ whose musical qualities invoke forms associated with the festive season, or the ‘Canonic Variations on Vom Himmel Hoch’, a work whose title indicates Bach’s wish that it be played in the Christmas season. The bookended Preludes and Fugues have also been chosen for their joyful affects, giving a more subjective taste of the Christmas spirit.

Prelude and Fugue G major BWV 550

1 Prelude

The Prelude of BWV 550 is reminiscent of Buxtehude and Bruhns, and not as well known as its cousin, BWV 541. Written in three-time, it is tightly constructed from its opening motive of a suspirans (three quavers after a rest), which develops into a running quaver figure that permeates the whole. A manual introduction leads into a pedal solo, which is followed by a lengthy pedal point. The bulk of the prelude consists of attractive sequences, eventually coming together for the final cadences over long held pedal notes. The prelude closes as it opens, with the suspirans figure tumbling in three-fold repetition. There follows a three-bar transition, in four-time, to move the harmony toward the dominant in preparation for the Fugue.

2 Fugue

The fugue starts with a jaunty six-bar subject, alternating crotchets and quavers. Some syncopated rhythms in the countersubject play against the more rhythmically solid subject. Later episodes develop the shortened anapaest rhythm (short-long), developing it in sequence. The final page, with the pedal entry, sees the texture move from three parts to four, providing a satisfying and virtuosic conclusion to an otherwise playful fugue.

3 Chorale prelude 'Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her' (Kirnb. coll. No. 11) BWV 770

In BWV 770, the chorale melody is treated fugally, the feel austere and solid, with the chorale given in slow, even notes. This is a wonderful setting with a through-composed structure: each section of the fugue is based on consecutive phrases of the chorale: four phrases, four sections. Each section treats the phrases on the manuals, but culminates with the phrase given in the pedals. The affect is one of gravitas.

4 Chorale prelude 'Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her' BWV 738

BWV 738 is a sprightly setting, full of semiquavers, and stile brisé figurations - the broken-chord texture typical for harpsichord music. The chorale melody is easy to pick out at the top of the textures, amidst the decorations. These are given as semiquavers that have a triplet feel, given the use of two time signatures: 12/8 and 4/4. The figurations in the manuals often

go against the beat, giving the music impetus and vitality.

5 Chorale prelude 'Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ' BWV 723

BWV 723 is a gentle setting with the right hand playing a plain version of the chorale over a fugal left hand and pedal accompaniment. There is a harmonic and contrapuntal simplicity to the prelude, with the chorale singing out over the three lower parts, resulting in a meditative, gentle affect.

6 Chorale prelude 'Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ' BWV 722

The chorale is given straight, but ornamented, with virtuosic episodes to link the lines of the chorale, the same treatment as other chorales on this disc such as 'In dulci jubilo', BWV 729. This type of prelude allows for virtuosity, not only in the figurations but in the harmony. BWV 722 is notable for the final cadence, extended with multiple chromaticisms, such that when the final (major) chord resolves, there is a great feeling of gladness.

7 Chorale prelude 'Wir Christenleut habn jetzund Freud' (Kirnb. coll. No. 21) BWV 710

BWV 710 is given a trio treatment, in a lively 6/8, with the chorale melody in the pedal: it is in the style of an instrumental trio, with two violins and cello. The melody forms the bass of the harmony, below an attractive sparring between the two voices, writing full of harmonic turns and elegant trills. The final phrases of the chorale are presented with beautifully-wrought suspended harmonies in the manuals, given in invertible counterpoint.

8 **Chorale prelude 'In dulci jubilo' BWV 729**

As with BWV 722, BWV 729 presents the chorale played in homophony, as though in a liturgical setting, but with interpolations between the lines that sound extemporary. BWV 729 has been made famous through its traditionally being played at the end of the service of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge. In the prelude, the interpolations become increasingly more virtuosic, with the note values increasing from quavers to triplet quavers to semiquavers. Despite the florid nature of these insertions, the overall affect of BWV 729 is one of gravitas, which is striking given the more dance-like feel that can arise from the compound metre given to the chorale.

9-12 **Pastorella BWV 590**

The 'Pastorella', BWV 590, is a four-movement sectional work. It is unique in Bach's keyboard output, though details such as the key scheme and structure suggest an Italian sonata model. The first part is a gentle piece in a pastoral F major, set in a lilting 12/8, with the left hand on the plaintive *vox humana* stop. A striking feature of the piece is the pedal point: the counterpoint in the manuals unfolds over long, held pedal notes that underpin the harmony and give a feeling of expansiveness and space. This leads to the second section, in the dominant key, played here in a rustic style, as though on woodwinds. The third section gives the hint of a darker affect, set in the dominant minor: a melancholy right-hand melody singing over a left-hand accompaniment. The spritely, joyful, final movement reverts to F major, in the original 6/8 time. The pastoral affect of the work, though strictly

only applicable to the first movement, is underscored by the fact that each movement subtly includes a drone, features that link the work with other festive pastoral movements, such as the 'Pifa' from Handel's *Messiah*.

13 **Fugue ("Jig") BWV 577**

The so-called 'Jig' Fugue is an anomaly. With a subject similar to Buxtehude's Prelude in C BuxWV 174, its authorship by Bach has traditionally been challenged, although more recent scholarship has confirmed BWV 577 as indeed by Bach. Not attached to a prelude, the Fugue stands alone, a fact that also fittingly reflects its unique musical character. The 'jig'-like nature of the affect is obvious from the start of a long winding subject, with wide intervals and four clear sections, each musically distinct. The variety and richness of the subject makes possible a colourful fugue that dances along through a number of episodes.

14 **Chorale prelude 'Meine Seele erhebt den Herren' (Fuga sopra il Magnificat) BWV 733**

This is a setting of the chorale melody set to the words of the Magnificat from Luke chapter 1, a melody also known as the *tonus peregrinus*. BWV 733 is a fugue in duple-time, played mostly in the manuals, though culminating powerfully with the pedals giving a full rendition of the melody. This striking structure - mostly manuals, but with pedals entering at the end for greater effect - is often associated with Pachelbel. The gravitas of these pedal entries are intensified by the other factors that crown the setting: a five part texture, with an extra tenor part emerging

with the pedal; some magnificent stretti in the densely-worked counterpoint of the inner parts; and a fine long pedal point below the final chromatic harmony.

15-19 **Canonic Variations on ‘Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her’ BWV 769**

BWV 769 is an example of Bach’s tendency to take a genre, or a technique, and exhaust its capabilities. This can be seen in other large-scale works such as the Art of Fugue or Clavierübung III. In this case, with astonishing technical virtuosity, Bach not only writes a series of canons on the chorale, but in doing so deliberately explores all the possible intervals for canons, except the fourth. Also, there are canons explored in all possible textures between the right hand, the left hand, and the pedals. The depth of rational thinking behind the work reflects its origins: BWV 769 was published in 1747, and presented to the Society for the Musical Sciences in Leipzig, of which Bach was a member. It also relates to other canons written by Bach around this time, such as the Fourteen Canons BWV 1087, and the canons in the Goldberg Variations (1741). Peter Williams notes that there are striking motivic similarities between the chorale ‘Vom Himmel Hoch’ and these other canons, especially the famous canon BWV 1076 on a bass line, and bass-lines found in the Goldberg Variations: it seems Bach was exploring the canonic possibilities of this chorale across a wide spectrum of pieces. BWV 769 unfolds five canons, though their order crucially depends on which one of two extant versions is selected: BWV 769, or 769a. BWV 769 is older, and is the version played here. Note that Bach’s title for

the work highlights that one reason behind the selection of ‘Vom Himmel hoch’ is its Christmas associations, with its theological overtones of the incarnation.

i) Canon at the octave between the right hand and the left hand, with the chorale in the pedal. The semiquaver scales give the impression of bells, or perhaps the flutterings of an angel’s wings.

ii) Canon at the fifth between the right hand and the left hand, with the chorale in the pedal. The writing is reminiscent of the trio sonatas here, with a violinistic style in the manuals.

iii) Material based on the chorale is given in canon at the seventh between the left hand and pedals; the chorale itself can be heard in the right hand at the top of the texture. The harmony achieved here is beautiful, with some expressive dissonance.

iv) Canon in augmentation at the octave, between the right hand and the left hand. The chorale is heard in the pedal. Again, some striking harmony is presented here demonstrating Bach’s way of turning an academic exercise into something also aesthetically pleasing.

v) The final movement is a tour de force: the chorale is given in canon, at the sixth, and inverted between the right hand and the left hand; then at the third; then at the second between the pedal and the left hand; then at the ninth between pedal

and right hand. The five movements are then rounded off with a grand six-part texture, with all four phrases of the chorale appearing at the same time, in the manner of a quodlibet. To cap off the astonishing richness of this end, there is a brief rendition of the B-A-C-H motif embedded in the texture, Bach signing his musical name off.

BWV 696 – 704 share a common form: little fuguetas, or small fugues, all for manuals only, all on the openings of their respective chorales, making the setting instantly recognizable. The chorales have all been chosen for their textural and theological connection to Christmas.

[20] Chorale prelude ‘Christum wir sollen loben schon’ (or) ‘Was fürchtest du Feind, Herodes, sehr’ (Fughetta; Kirnb. coll. No. 7) BWV 696

BWV 696 is conceived in an elegant, stately style, with some ornamentation in the inner parts, perhaps seeking to invoke a gentle ‘praise’ to Christ suggested in the text. A slow harmonic rhythm underneath a steady quaver movement gives rise to some striking chromatic harmony throughout.

[21] Chorale prelude ‘Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ’ (Fughetta; Kirnb. coll. No. 8) BWV 697

BWV 697 is also elegant, with attractive running semiquavers that accompany the steady quaver rhythm of the subject. The stream of semiquavers, provided first by the countersubject, are linked by one scholar to the ‘Angel Throng of other Christmas

chorales’ (Williams 2003 p. 436), also referenced in the text: the ‘Engelschar’ who rejoice in the truth of God born man in Christ.

[22] Chorale prelude ‘Herr Christ, der ein’ge Gottes Sohn’ (Fughetta; Kirnb. coll. No. 9) BWV 698

BWV 698 is infused with the motifs and intervals of the chorale melody. The initial subject of the fugue, in the right hand, is accompanied by an anapaest rhythmic figure (short-short-long) that has an influence all through, with a move to running semiquavers by the end, whose notes ingeniously hide the notes of the chorale. Also, prominent throughout are the snatches of the chorale melody heard in steady crotchets. There are at least two ideas in the text that are perhaps reflected in the pervasive use of fast notes in the prelude: the ‘sprouting’ (entsprossen) of the Son from the Father in the incarnation, or the rays of Christ the morning star that ‘stretch’ (strecken) to the distance.

[23] Chorale prelude ‘Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland’ (Fughetta; Kirnb. coll. No. 10) BWV 699

BWV 699 is a setting with hints of real yearning, perhaps reflecting the theme of waiting that is present in the text of this Advent chorale, given musical expression though the use of suspensions. Played very softly on this recording, the work reflects an introverted affect of Christmas joy.

[24] Chorale prelude ‘Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her’ (Fughetta; Kirnb. coll. No. 12) BWV 701

BWV 701 is given in an airy three-part texture, characterised

by semiquavers, perhaps highlighting the idea of descent 'from heaven' (von himmel) of this Christmas chorale's title. As the harmonies shift, so the subject moulds to fit them by quoting other lines of the chorale's melody. In some of the counterpoint, especially the use of scalic figures, this little prelude perhaps forms a little study for the Variations on this chorale, heard above (BWV 769).

[25] Chorale prelude 'Gottes Sohn ist kommen' (Fughetta; Kirnb. coll. No. 14) BWV 703

BWV 703 is harmonically striking; though it starts in F major, Bach soon introduces an additional flat, moving the harmonic focus towards the flatter subdominant side (B flat major), before cancelling the flat at the last moment to land the end of the prelude back in F major. Given the association in Bach's music often made between the flat side of the circle of fifths and theological ideas of the Christian believer's enemies - death, Satan, the law - it is plausible that this exploration of the flatter side of F major links to the idea in the text of the 'raging of the devil' (Teufels Wüten), against which the text is asking God to protect the Christian.

[26] Chorale prelude 'Lob sei dem allmächtigen Gott' (Fughetta; Kirnb. coll. No. 15) BWV 704

BWV 704 is again concerned with praise, as was the first of these fughettas. In this prelude, as with the previous BWV 703, there is some very striking harmony produced in Bach's setting. Like BWV 703, it is harmonized in F major for the most part, but

the harmony moves to close the prelude on the dominant of the relative minor, A major, a key which also sets the scene for the final work on this disc.

Prelude and Fugue A major BWV 536

It seems that the Prelude and Fugue of BWV 536 were conceived together, and though some confusion has arisen over an additional version (BWV 536a), it seems plausible that BWV 536 is an earlier work by Bach.

[27] Prelude

Broken arpeggios up and down the keyboards introduce this charming little prelude. Though in the North German style of Buxtehude (the opening arpeggios are reminiscent of those at the start of Buxtehude's D major Prelude, BuxWV 139), it has harmonic and melodic touches that are all Bach. The arpeggiated opening leads into a transition marked by pedal points - long held pedal notes above which the harmony and virtuosic manual writing unfold. The rest of the Prelude develops the arpeggiated figures with chains of beautifully-wrought suspensions.

[28] Fugue

A slow descending subject in three-time opens the fugue. It is suggested that subject bears a resemblance to the sinfonia of Cantata 152 (1714); but the key of the Cantata is G minor, so the resemblance is slight. The fugue is set in the form of a melodious triple-time dance - a minuet, or forlana - which unfolds spaciously through several episodes that direct the

music toward a wonderfully inventive final section, full of ingenious contrapuntal intricacy and suspensions. A final pedal solo - a descending arpeggio figure, derived from material heard previously in the fugue though perhaps also consciously invoking the start of the Prelude - brings the fugue to a close.

George Parsons, 2017

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THE ORGAN OF TRINITY COLLEGE CHAPEL

The organ of Trinity College Chapel was built by the Swiss firm Metzler Söhne in 1976. The design, by Bernhardt Edskes, incorporated the surviving pipework of the two organs built for Trinity by “Father” Bernard Smith in 1694 and 1708. The organ has three manuals and forty-two ranks, of which seven are original. The 8’ Principal on the Rückpositiv is from Smith’s 1694 organ, while the 16’ Principal on the Pedal and the 16’ Principal, 8’ and 4’ Octave, 2’ Quinte, and 2’ Superoctave on the Great are from 1708. The Victorian enlargements to both the instrument and its cases have been removed, and all the pipework is contained within the restored Smith cases, whose carving recalls the school of Grinling Gibbons. The cases are likely to have been designed by Smith and executed by him or one of his team. The salient characteristics of this mechanical-action organ are the meticulous craftsmanship and artistic integrity employed by Metzlers, the durability of the instrument, together with its rich but gentle resonance, its aptness for the acoustics of the Chapel, and its exquisite balance. It is understandably regarded as one of the finest instruments in the United Kingdom.

HAUPTWERK, C-f”

1•	Principal	16
2•	Octave	8
3	Hohlflöte	8
4•	Octave	4
5	Spitzflöte	4
6•	Quinte	2 2/3
7•	Superoctave	2
8	Sesquialter	III
9	Cornett	IV
10	Mixtur	IV-V
11	Trompete	8
12	Vox Humana	8

RÜCKPOSITIV

13•	Principal	8
14	Gedackt	8
15	Octave	4
16	Rohrflöte	4
17	Octave	2
18	Gemshorn	2
19	Larigot	1 1/3
20	Sesquialter	II
21	Scharf	III
22	Dulcian	8
	Tremulant	

SCHWELLWERK

23	Viola	8
24	Suavial	8
25	Rohrflöte	8
26	Principal	4
27	Gedacktflöte	4
28	Nasard	2 2/3
29	Doublette	2
30	Terz	1 3/5
31	Mixtur	IV
32	Fagott	16
33	Trompete	8
	Tremulant	

PEDAL

34•	Principal	16
35	Subbass	16
36	Octavbass	8
37	Bourdon	8
38	Octave	4
39	Mixtur	V
40	Posaune	16
41	Trompete	8
42	Trompete	4

45 Rückpositiv/Hauptwerk 46 Schwellwerk/Hauptwerk

47 Hauptwerk/Pedal 48 Rückpositiv/Pedal 49 Schwellwerk/Pedal

(• Father Smith ranks)

DAVID GOODE

David Goode is Organist at Eton College, combining this post with a flourishing performing career.

A music scholar at Eton, and then organ scholar at King's College, Cambridge, he studied organ with David Sanger and in Amsterdam with Jacques van Oortmerssen. From 1996-2001 he was Sub-Organist at Christ Church, Oxford; following prizes at the 1997 St. Alban's Competition, and the 1998 Calgary Competition, he concentrated on a freelance career between 2001 and 2003. In 2003 he moved for 2 years to Los Angeles as Organist-in-Residence at First Congregational Church, home to the world's largest church organ.

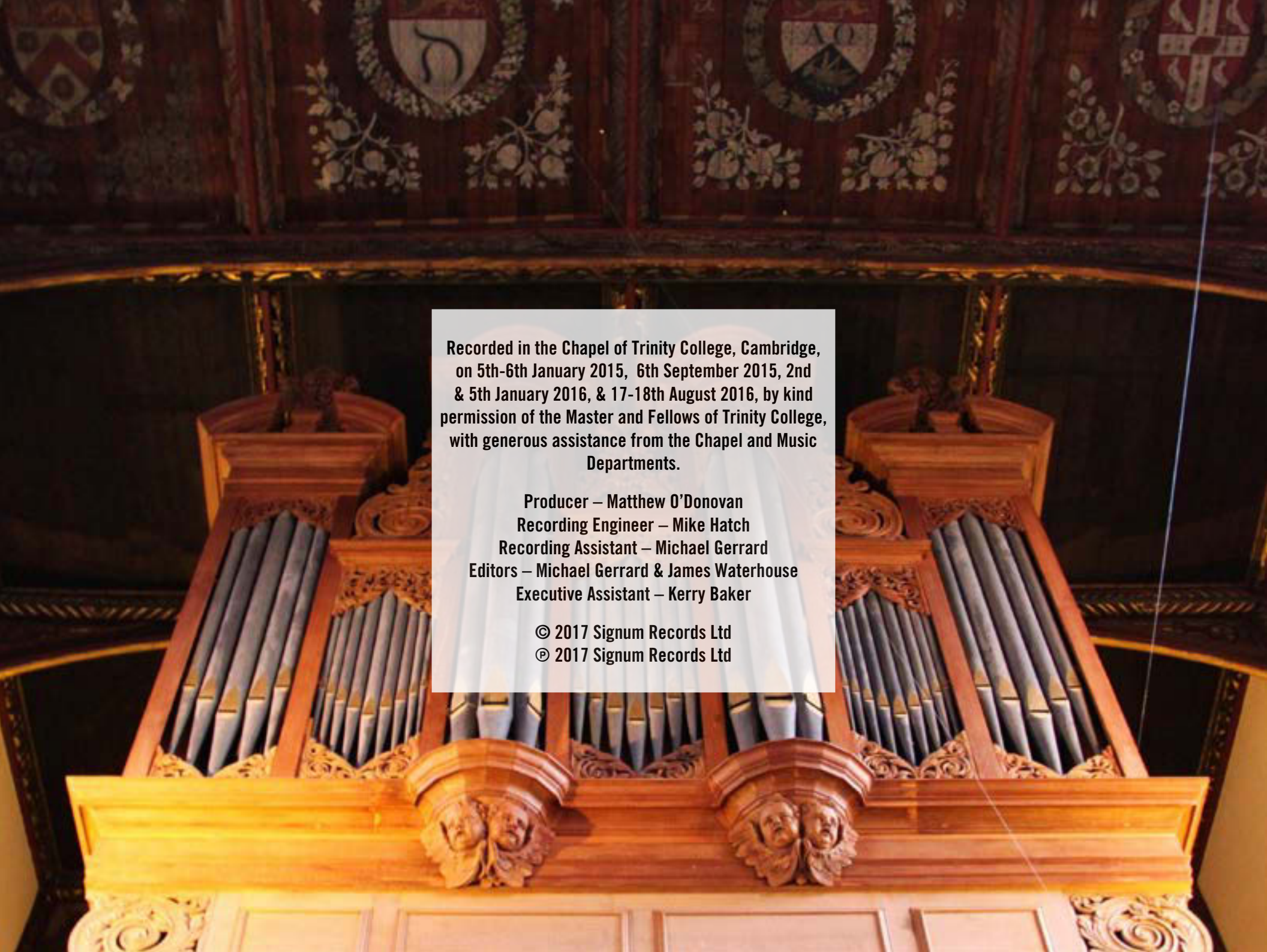
In 1999 he made the first of numerous appearances at the Proms, and in 2002 he made his recital debuts at the RFH and at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, subsequently playing all over Europe, the US, Australia and the Far East. He plays at the AGO National Convention in June 2016. He also has an established partnership with the trumpeter Alison Balsom: in March 2014 they played for the reopening concert of the RFH organ.

Of his Bach CD for Signum in 2013 The Times said: 'One of Britain's finest organists puts the 1714 organ in Freiberg Cathedral through its paces An exemplary introduction'. 7 CDs of a complete survey of Reger's organ music have now also appeared, to warm reviews. He has forged a strong relationship

over the years on Radio 3 with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the BBC Singers, and has played numerous contemporary works, including Francis Pott's *Christus* ('a stupendous achievement' The Times), and Peter Maxwell Davies' *Solstice of Light*.

He has also developed a profile as a composer: a set of anthems has been published, together with recordings by the choir of King's College, Cambridge; and his Blitz Requiem was performed in September 2013 by the Bach Choir at St Paul's Cathedral, and broadcast on Classic FM. He played at the AGO Convention in June 2016, and is a juror at the 2017 St. Alban's International Competition.





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