



Sunday Organ Recital Series

Organ Recital by Jeremy Lloyd

Sunday 1st November 2020 at 5.00pm

PROGRAMME

J. S. Bach (1685-1750): *Meine Seele Erhebt den Herren BWV 733*

Henri Dallier (1849-1934): *Stella Matutina* and *O Clemens, O Pia* from *Cinq Invocations*

Jean Langlais (1907-1991): *Ave Maria, Ave Maris Stella* from *Trois Paraphrases Grégoriennes*

Flor Peeters (1903-1986): *Toccata, Fugue et Hymne on Ave Maris Stella*

PROGRAMME NOTES

Today's recital is comprised of music written around the theme of the Virgin Mary, with pieces inspired by and incorporating plainsong Marian hymns.

Meine Seele erhebt den Herren is Martin Luther's translation of the Magnificat canticle (*My soul magnifies the Lord*, also known as the Song of Mary) and is integral to the services of most Christian denominations. It is one of the most ancient Christian hymns and possibly the earliest Marian hymn. The text is taken from the Gospel of Luke, where it is spoken by Mary on the visitation to her cousin Elizabeth. Originally sung to a German variant of the *tonus peregrinus*, Bach uses the plainsong as the opening Fugue subject and masterfully weaves it through the counterpoint, ending in a final declamation from the pedals. It has been suggested that this piece may actually be the work of Bach's pupil, Johann Ludwig Krebs.

Henri Dallier's status as a composer has been unjustly masked over time by his more famous colleagues, such as Guilmant and Widor. Dallier studied the organ with César Franck at the Conservatoire de Paris where he obtained first prize in Organ and Fugue. He was appointed *titulaire du grand orgue* of Saint-Eustache, before succeeding Gabriel Fauré at the church of La Madeleine. His *Cinq Invocations* were written in 1926 and are all based on Latin texts to the Virgin Mary. They are all evocative and light-hearted, almost in the style of a song without words.

Like Dallier, Langlais spent his professional life in Paris as *organiste titulaire* of the basilica of Sainte-Clotilde, holding this position for forty-three years. Blind from the age of two, he studied the organ with André Marchal at the National Institute for Blind Children in Paris, before commencing studies at the Paris Conservatoire. Much of Langlais' music uses rich and complex harmonies which are sometimes modal, and their mood can range from the hauntingly beautiful to the eccentric. His Three Gregorian Paraphrases are all based on Gregorian chant, utilising this unique sound-world which would have featured heavily throughout his musical life.

Born near Antwerp, Flor Peeters studied in Mechelen and later spent 63 years as organist of St. Rombouts Cathedral. Having taught at three separate conservatoires, he no doubt influenced many players and composers throughout Europe and North America. He gave over 1,200 organ recitals across the world and instigated the permission to allow organ recitals in Belgian churches, which was not possible until the 1930s. Dedicated to Charles Tournemire, his *Toccata, Fugue and Hymn on Ave Maris Stella* masterfully combines the plainsong with Peeters' typical modal harmonies, before climaxing to an heroic finale.