



ORGAN GIANTS

J.S. BACH • MENDELSSOHN • SCHUMANN • BRAHMS • B-A-C-H

Samuel Bristow

Sunday 17th January 2021, 4.30 pm

Live-stream only

 **St PAUL'S**
CATHEDRAL

Complete Organ Works of Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

Recital I

Allegro moderato maestoso in C major

This grand march was originally intended for the Sonata No 2 in C minor, before Mendelssohn replaced it with another piece of similar character. Despite this rejection, it is an invigorating work which exudes both charm and confidence.

Praeludium in C minor

was composed in 1841 upon the request of Henry E. Dibdin. Dibdin had invited Mendelssohn to take up a professorship at the University of Edinburgh, but the composer had just accepted a post in Leipzig and sent this brief sketch as a friendly gesture.

Andante Sostenuto in F minor

is a deeply expressive fugue originally composed in 1839. While Mendelssohn debated its inclusion in the first sonata, he ultimately decided against this; while the sonata benefitted structurally from its omission, it remains a highly successful stand-alone work.

Theme and Variations in D major

was written in 1844 as another possible movement for the organ sonatas. A poised melody in D major is followed by a charming set of four variations which encapsulate Mendelssohn's inventiveness upon a simple theme.

Sonata in F minor (Op. 65, No 1)

- i. Allegro Maestoso e Serioso
- ii. Adagio
- iii. Andante Recitativo
- iv. Allegro assai vivace

The genesis of this sonata can be traced to the winter of 1844, when Mendelssohn's youngest son was gravely ill. The dramatic first movement is an ominous fugue based on a motif from Bach's St

Matthew Passion, with solemn interjections of the Lutheran hymn 'What my God wants shall happen', perhaps indicating Mendelssohn's tension between fatherly anguish and acceptance of God's will. The tender and lilting Adagio is followed by an uncertain recitative, which leads to an eruption of joy in F major, possibly capturing the exultant feeling in the Mendelssohn household as his son recovered.

Notes by Samuel Bristow

Samuel Bristow

Samuel Bristow is a versatile young musician based in London, currently working as the Organ Scholar of St Paul's Cathedral. As one of the full time organists there, he gives recitals on the world-famous organ and regularly accompanies and conducts services, working with the eminent Cathedral Choir in the daily liturgy. Samuel studied at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, graduating with first class honours in 2019 and was a recipient of the John Campbell Keyboard Prize. His teachers were Daniel Moulton and Henry Fairs. Other influences were Kerry Beaumont, Paul Ledington Wright and Paul Spicer. He has held organ scholarships at Coventry and Birmingham Cathedrals, followed by a year at Salisbury Cathedral. He has performed in many high-profile venues throughout the United Kingdom, including St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol; University of St Andrew's, Scotland and the cathedrals of Bristol, Truro, Blackburn and Glasgow. He has broadcasted regularly for BBC Radio and made an appearance on BBC One's 'Songs of Praise'. He holds associateship diplomas from the Royal College of Organists and Trinity College London.

For more details, please visit www.samuelbristoworganist.com.

Next recital | Live-stream only

Sunday 24th January at 4.30 pm

William Fox | Complete Organ Works of J.S. Bach Recital II

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