

ORGAN GIANTS

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Samuel Bristow

Sunday 14th March 2021, 4.30 pm

Live-stream only



Complete Organ Works of Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

Recital III

Sonata in A major (Op. 65, No 3)

Many of the movements from the Sonatas of 1845 were reworked by Mendelssohn from older pieces with which he was not completely satisfied – the first movement ('Con moto maestoso') of this sonata was one such piece. The movement opens with a triumphal wedding march, originally written for his sister, Fanny. An intense double fugue follows, the first subject based on a tenor recitative from his Second Symphony: 'Watcher, is the night soon over?' The pedal states the chorale 'Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir', a paraphrase of Psalm 130. The *Andante Tranquillo* provides a gentle after-thought, concluding the sonata in an understated manner.

Praeludium in D minor

Composed in 1820 at the age of eleven, the *Praeludium* is Mendelssohn's first organ composition. The piece can therefore be viewed much in the same light as Mozart's operetta *Bastien und Bastienne*; while comparatively an unsophisticated piece it nonetheless represents Mendelssohn's first venture into an artform he would subsequently master.

Prelude and Fugue in D minor (Op. 37, No 3)

By contrast, Op. 37 demonstrates Mendelssohn fully matured. The Prelude perhaps gives a glimpse of Mendelssohn the improviser, and feels akin to an unpredictable whirlwind. The well-crafted Fugue is solemn and dignified.

Sonata in D major (Op. 65, No 5)

The melody of the opening Chorale is thought to be original, although it bears a striking resemblance to the hymn 'Dir, dir Jehova will ich sing'n'. This is followed by a plaintive 'Andante con moto', a song without words accompanied by a pizzicato bass line; a feature for which Mendelssohn was reputed in his organ improvisations. The



introduction for the 'Allegro Maestoso' emanates from the Second Symphony; and the organ movement exudes unreserved joy. The main theme is accompanied by flowing arpeggios in a bubbling and energetic texture, concluding this sonata with buoyant extravagance.

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 Leddington 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 21st March at 4.30 pm

William Fox | Passiontide Meditation, Complete Bach Recital VI

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