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THE BERKSHIRE ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION

*presents*

MARILYN  
MASON

**Reading Town Hall**

**Wednesday, 4th October, 1972**

*PROGRAMME 5p*

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Marilyn Mason is Chairman of the Department of Organ of the University of Michigan. She has been guest Professor at Columbia University, and also at Union Theological Seminary where she received the Doctorate of Sacred Music degree in 1954. She has been heard in recitals throughout North America and Europe. Dr. Mason was the first American woman to play in Westminster Abbey, when she represented the United States at the International Congress of Organists in 1957. Subsequent tours of England and the Continent have included a return engagement at Westminster Abbey and appearances in Vienna, and Berlin. The summer of 1960 she played four concerts at the Auditorio Nacional in Mexico City, being the first woman organist to play in Latin America. She has a special interest in contemporary music, and has commissioned many composers to write for the organ.

## Suite for Organ

*Edmund Haines*

Promenade

Air

Toccata

Edmund Haines was born in Iowa in 1914. He studied at Kansas University and at the Eastman School of music, returning in due course to become a member of staff at both. In 1941, he was appointed to the music faculty at Michigan, where Marilyn Mason is Chairman of the Department of Organ. This work was commissioned by Marilyn Mason and is dedicated to her. It was written in 1948.

## Magnificat du Huitième ton en sol majeur

*Le Clerc*

Plein Jeu

Duo

Jeu de clarion

Flûtte

Musette

Grand Jeu

The use of organ verses for the Magnificat dates from the middle ages but musically became an important part of the service in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Indeed, the liturgical role of the organ in France provided the curators of the great instruments with opportunities to display their prowess in no small way. This, officially backed in the seventeenth century, was more or less halted by Pius X and finally put paid to by the ideals of Vatican II.

There are usually six sections to the organ Magnificat, *alternatim* for the verses of the canticle and one for the Gloria. For this setting, the eighth plainsong tone is used, set in G major. The titles of the verses indicate quite clearly the registration scheme intended by the composer; some idea of the conventions used may be found in such works as Mersenne's *Harmonie Universelle*. These were very stylised; for instance in Le Clerc's setting of the Troisième Ton they are Plein Jeu, Duo, Recit, Voix Humaine, Musette and Grand Jeu.

The Plein Jeu was the term given for the narrow scaled flue work (later including a wider range, but no reeds) and the reed

stops of the pedal organ. Duos could be taken in various ways with contrasting pitch and tone qualities on two manuals. The *Jeu de Clarion* used prestants, nazard and the four foot trumpet. The *Flûte allemande* was of four foot pitch, but, unlike the English eighteenth century use of the term, this was not its unvariable pitch. The *Musette* indicated the bag-pipe type instrument of that name and could be registered by a cromorne and nazard. Finally, the loud *Grands Jeu* movement used the manual reeds and cornets.

Naturally, to perform the music of this period strictly according to these conventions requires an instrument that leans in its tonal structure towards this style.

### **Tocatta, Adagio and Fugue (BWV 564)**

*J. S. Bach*

As it stands in modern editions, this is one of Bach's longest organ works, partly because it has three movements and partly because it is thought out on a large scale. However, it is frequently forgotten that there is a good deal of evidence to refute the claim that this structure is unique in the organ works. For instance the Weimar C major Prelude & Fugue (BWV 545) was associated from an early date with a slow movement (later more well known as the second movement of the Fifth Trio Sonata) and the "Great" G Major Prelude & Fugue was divided by a movement similar to part of the third movement of the Fourth Trio Sonata. So this practice of another movement, making in effect a concerto-like structure, is by no means limited to this magnificent work.

It opens strongly in the best North German manner. How devastating is its effect in a really resonant building with suitably voiced pipework; how utterly misplaced in the ears of an Englishman seventy years ago when, in his 'dead' church it was played, according to a well-used edition, "full swell closed."

The manual opening ends with an arpeggio (to make best use of the echo); the pedal takes this cross shape and develops it, very much reminding one of Georges Boëhm. At the end, the triplets sharpen to a dotted rhythm (unless one is a pedant in the baroque rhythm field) and the main part of the Prelude begins. Two-thirds or so of this has a decidedly upward thrust, pushing onwards towards a thickening of the pedal part, until the work finishes over a succession of bottom C's on the pedal accompanied by a resumption of arpeggios in the manuals.

The opening of the *Adagio* is one of 'the' moments in Bach's organ works. The idea of a melody (with Bach's usual habit of written out figuration) with a pedal part moving in octaves, is an old one, but somehow this section in A minor is a back-tingling piece of writing which warrants no description. It ends with an innocent perfect cadence, moving immediately into a *Grave* interlude, a *Durezza* in the true Italian sense.

The stage is set—something *has* to follow. C Major, 6-8 time, a few common chord arpeggios and some string-like figuration takes us quickly to the dominant, indeed before we have realised it. And before we have realised too, that before our very ears, Bach has sown the seeds of one of his finest organ fugues. Quite obviously the parts enter—S - A T - pedal; Subject, answer, subject, answer and with a counter-subject that neatly fills in the rests in the subject. This figure—slightly reminiscent of the D major fugue—comes in effectively during the manuals-only section later on. The reason for the positive atmosphere in this fugue is the use of the major third and of the perfect fifth, both in the subject and counter-subject, and Bach could afford to introduce a new, descending figure towards the end, just as he hinted at in the Prelude. After the last pedal entry, ending with an inverted perfect cadence we are left for a moment in mid-air while the display element (that is in every organist who sat on an organ bench) is allowed out. Not that Bach has, in fact, neglected the display of skill throughout the Fugue, but the conventional pedal solo must be put in somewhere, and so it links up with the final dominant chord to clinch all. But, again the master has the last word and, leaving his feet free to rest on the bench-stretcher underneath, he concludes with a couple of bars for manuals alone.

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## INTERVAL

(Refreshments available in the Foyer)

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### **Pastorale**

*Roger-Ducasse*

Jean Jules Aimable Roger-Ducasse was born at Bordeaux in 1873 and died there in 1954. He studied under Fauré who influenced his early style considerably. Later, the simplicity of

Fauré was dropped in favour of more elaborate patterns; the result was a polyphonic style interspersed with harmonic ideas that were so beloved of French composers of his generation.

Most of Roger-Ducasse's works are vocal, orchestral or for piano. In addition he wrote an opera and a mimodrama. It is, perhaps, rather surprising to find one of the more important papers on him and his music is by the Anglo-Russian scholar Alfred J. Swann.

This work was written in 1909, the year Roger-Ducasse was appointed inspector of singing-teaching in the City of Paris schools—a far cry from the active musician that he was.

### **Sketch in E minor**

*Marcel Dupré*

This work is no. 1 of *Deux Esquisses*, Op. 41 and dates from 1945. It is, in effect, a study in repeated notes in the style of a light-hearted scherzo.

Dupré's comparatively recent death has robbed the organ world of a truly great performer, a scholar and a masterly writer for organ. It has severed a connection with Guilmant and Widor, with Gigout and Vierne. He was never actually Titulaire at Notre Dame although he acted as organist there during the First World War and for some years afterwards. It was this that really set him up for his quite staggering series of tours across the world, playing Bach, the great nineteenth century masters, his own compositions (which latterly he frequently forgot and skillfully reconstructed as he went along) and, above all, his improvisations.

Dupré, in spite of his scholarship, was ever a symphonist. His own writing betrays this, but so too did his contentment with his instrument at St-Sulpice, which for a century or more after its construction by Cavaille-Coll remains unchanged except for the addition of a couple of stops. "I hope that it will ever remain so" wrote Dupré not so very long before his death. So there was the conservative on one side of the coin; on the other was the creative artist—the composer of such works as *The Way of the Cross*, *The Passion Symphony* and the *Three Preludes & Fugues*.

From the age of ten, when, in 1896 he played Bach Preludes and Fugues from memory at the Exhibition at Rouen, to his

death he remained an impressive technician and a musician whom the future, without doubt, will eventually hold in great esteem.

### **Variations on the Austrian Hymn**

*J. K. Paine*

The composer is not a hot contender for the popularity polls in this country but across the Atlantic he has some claim to fame. Who is he?

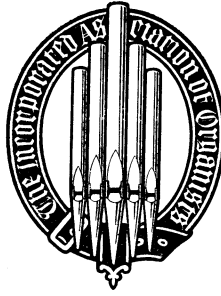
John Knowles Paine

Born at Portland, Maine

so it is said. But his claim to fame is deeper than that. Born in 1839, he started his musical studies in America but went to Germany at the age of twenty-one. This was the turning point in his development. He was instrumental in the provision of Walcker's 89 stop organ installed in Boston's Music Hall in 1863 and was appointed to Harvard. The significance of this was that he raised the status of music there from that taught by an "instructor" to one having its own Chair, and this the first in the United States. He died, soon after his retirement, in 1906.

Much of Paine's work is conservative in style, particularly his earlier compositions. Many were founded on literary sources and his interests did not stop at the standard English authors but included classical poets as well. His orchestral works were frequently performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and after some years of neglect there are some signs that his music is coming back into favour.

Paine's Op. 3 consists of two sets of Concert Variations, one on the famous melody by Haydn, the other on The Star Spangled Banner. Bearing in mind Paine's background, it seems an eminently suitable combination. The present work starts with the theme; there are four variations and the composition is rounded off with a fugue.



## **THE BERKSHIRE ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION**

has nearly two hundred members, and is one of the largest Associations affiliated to the world-wide Incorporated Association of Organists. The Berkshire Association, conscious of the unique place of the Reading Town Hall organ in our musical heritage, is endeavouring to present this magnificent and historic instrument to the public through a number of recitals by eminent organists.

The Berkshire Association is centred on Reading, and members meet monthly for recitals, talks, and discussions on topics of interest in the organ world, and in the summer, trips to interesting instruments are arranged if possible. All meetings are open to friends and to members of other Associations. The Berkshire Association has two Branches, centred on Newbury and Windsor, both of which arrange their own activities in addition to those of the main syllabus.

These Celebrity Recitals are only one part of the Association's efforts to bring the best in organ music to music lovers in Reading. For several years we have heard some of the most famous European and English organists. Details of the next recital will be found on the back cover of this programme.



## THE ORGAN

This four-manual organ is a fine example of the work of "Father" Henry Willis, and was installed in its present position in 1882. It is an enlargement by him of his original three-manual instrument which stood in the Small Town Hall from 1864. The magnificent carved oak case was designed by Thomas Lainson, the architect of the Large Town Hall, and was the gift of the Reading Philharmonic Society. This organ is one of the few instruments representing that era of English organ-building which remains almost entirely in its original state. The only modifications have been the installation of electric rotary blowing plant, the replacing of the original "lever" Swell pedal by a balanced one, the polishing of the tin frontal pipes and the lowering of the pitch to modern concert pitch.

### SPECIFICATION

Great 3½" : 6½"	Swell 3½" : 5"	Choir (unenclosed) 3"
Double diapason 16	Double diapason 16	Lieblich gedact 8
Open diapason I 8	Open diapason 8	Salicional 8
Open diapason II 8	Stopped diapason 8 HP	Viol d'amore 8
Claribel flute 8	Principal 4	Flute harmonique 4
Principal 4	Piccolo 2	Piccolo harmonique 2
Flute harmonique 4	Sesquialtera (17-19-22) HP	Corno di bassetto 8
Twelfth 2½	Hautboy 8	Oboe 8
Fifteenth 2	Cornopean 8 HP	
Mixture (17-19-22)	Vox humana 8	
Posaune 8 HP	Clarion 4 HP	
Clarion 4 HP		
Pedal 3½" : 6½"	Solo (unenclosed) 3½" : 15"	Couplers
Open diapason 16	Hohl flute 8	Gt to Ped Ch to Ped
Violone 16	Concert flute 4	Sw to Ped Solo to Ped
Bourdon 16	Orchestral oboe 8	Sw to Gt Ch to Gt
Principal 8	Tuba 8 HP	Solo to Gt
Ophicleide 16 HP		Sw Oct to Gt
		Sw sub Oct to Gt
Composition Pedals	Compass	Pitch
4 to Gt and Ped	Manuals	Violin A = 440 c.p.s.
3 to Sw	CC to a <sup>3</sup> —58 notes	
Reversible Gt to Ped	Pedals (Radiating	<i>Action</i>
Balanced Swell pedal	& Concave)	Sw, Ch, Solo : Tracker
Tremulant	CCC to F—30 notes	Gt: Barker-Willis lever
		Pedal : Pneumatic

THE BERKSHIRE ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION

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*Our next presentation*

will be

on

WEDNESDAY, 28th MARCH, 1973

with

a return visit of

**Nicolas Kynaston**

at the Father Willis Organ

**TOWN HALL, READING**

**at 7.45 p.m.**

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We look forward to your continued support