

St Mary's Church, Welwyn
Organ Recital - Saturday 1 May at 11.15 am
Linden Innes-Hopkins

'Great' Prelude in C, BWV 547

Adagio from Toccata, Adagio and Fugue, BWV 564

'Great' Fugue in C, BWV 547

J S Bach (1685 – 1750)

Bach is known to have given a recital at the Heiligegeistekirche in Potsdam in 1747 and it is thought that this Prelude and Fugue may have been on the menu. The prelude is often referred to by organists as the 'Hickory, dickory, dock' prelude, although – to fit Bach's opening theme – it should really be called the 'Hickory, hickory, dickory, dock' prelude. It reveals Bach at his most cheerful. The fugue is yet another of Bach's many masterpieces. It is very tightly constructed; only in 17 bars is there no appearance of the fugue subject, so the fugue subject overlaps with itself, gets turned upside down and, in an exhilarating master-stroke, when the pedals finally join the party the subject proceeds in double time, like a ship in full sail. Today, between the prelude and fugue, you will hear the Adagio from another of Bach's great organ works.

Chant de Mai, Opus 53 No 1

Joseph Jongen (1873 – 1953)

Jongen was a Belgian composer, born in Liège. He was clearly extraordinarily talented, gaining admission to the Conservatoire when he was only seven years old. Despite composing very many pieces of music, not many of them are still performed regularly today. *Chant de mai* is not a serenade to the month of May but to one of his young pupils; even so, with its gently wafting harmonies, it suggests the warm breezes and rejuvenating greenery associated with the 'merry' month of May.

Voluntary in C

John Christopher Pepusch (1667 – 1752)

1. Largo 2. Flute 3. Stop Diapason 4. Cornet 5. Diapasons 6. Sexquialter 7. Cremona
8. Bassoon 9. The Twelfth 10. Diapason 11. Trumpet 12. Fugue (Full Organ)

Pepusch is probably most famous for his collaboration with John Gay in the composition of *The Beggar's Opera*. He was born in Berlin but by the turn of the century was living in London, a move that his older compatriot and contemporary, Handel, had made earlier. The *Voluntary in C* is his only surviving keyboard piece; it is a substantial piece in 12 movements which provide us with a 'grand tour' of the English organ of the 18th century. The organ here does not boast all the stops required but it does boast a good few, so Pepusch offers here a guided tour of the organ at St Mary's!

Marche Heroïque

Herbert Brewer (1865 – 1928)

Brewer was a chorister at Gloucester Cathedral, studied music at Oxford and later returned to Gloucester as cathedral organist, where he remained for the rest of his life. He was close friend of Elgar and, indeed, the *Marche Héroïque* is reminiscent of Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance Marches*. He was said to have had a 'bad day' if ever he played a wrong note! An upbeat opening section leads to a 'noble' tune; these two ideas form the basis for the entire piece. Coincidentally, (particularly as today's sequence of music was planned in early April), it was performed at the funeral of Earl Mountbatten of Burma on 5 September 1979.