



Robert Quinney organ

Thursday 14 July, 2022 - Oundle School Chapel

***Dic nobis Maria* [after Bassano] - Heinrich Scheidemann (c1595-1663)**

Scheidemann was born in Wöhrden in Holstein to an organist father. He studied with Sweelinck in Amsterdam from 1611 to 1614, and evidently was one of his favorite pupils, since Sweelinck dedicated a canon to him, prior to Scheidemann's return to Germany. By 1629 Scheidemann was in Hamburg as organist at the Catharinenkirche, a position which he held for more than thirty years, until his death in early 1663 during an outbreak of the plague.

Scheidemann was renowned as an organist and composer, as evidenced by the wide distribution of his works: more organ music by Scheidemann survives than by any other composer of the time, perhaps unsurprisingly, since his output consisted almost entirely of music for the instrument.

***Preamble: The road to Emmaus and Et cognoverunt eum* - Judith Bingham (b. 1952)**

Judith Bingham has written music since she was a small child. She studied both singing and composition at the Royal Academy of Music winning the Principal's Prize for Composition in 1972. In the 1980s, she joined the BBC Singers full time, and received a large number of choral commissions. Since then she has written for many professional and amateur choirs. She is a prolific writer of church and organ music, and has written seven *Missa Brevis*.

These two voluntaries are from her *Missa Brevis*, '*The road to Emmaus*'. After learning that Jesus is not in the tomb, two of the dispirited disciples walk along the road to Emmaus and were joined by a fellow traveller whom to dine with them. The preamble anticipates themes in the mass and paints a picture of the disciples on the dusty road to Emmaus. At dinner, when their fellow traveller breaks bread, they realise that this is Jesus, returned from the dead. This realization is depicted in *Et cognoverunt eum*: "and their eyes were opened".

***Ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la* BK64 - William Byrd (1543-1623)**

William Byrd is widely considered to be one of the greatest composers of the Renaissance and one of the greatest British composers. Byrd's majestic - and revolutionary - voluntary is based on the rising and then descending 6-note scale. The work in G but takes us on a harmonic journey the like of which had not previously been heard in English music.

***Prelude and Fugue in C minor* - Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)**

Dating from 1921, the *Prelude and Fugue in C minor* is characterised by a sense of drama and punctuated by bristling dissonances. The Prelude's ritornello-like alternation of chordal grandeur and rapid imitative sections recalls Bach's great *C minor Prelude and Fugue*, while the rhythmically complicated Fugue displays great ingenuity in its counterpoint.

***Meine Seel' erhebt den Herren* - Judith Bingham**

One of the chorales commissioned by the Orgelbüchlein Project, it is dark and chromatic, and paints a picture, perhaps, of the Virgin Mary waiting quietly in a dimly-lit room, just before the moment of Annunciation.

***Fuga sopra il Magnificat BWV 733* - Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**

An early work, based on a Gregorian chant associated with the Magnificat, and indeed later used by Bach in his *Magnificat*, its authorship has been questioned, some claiming it was not written by Bach but by his pupil, Johann Ludwig Krebs.

Robert Quinney is Organist and Tutorial Fellow in Music at New College, Oxford, and Associate Professor at the University Faculty of Music. His work comprises the daily direction and training of New College's world famous choir; teaching and supervision of college students; and lecturing and examining at the Faculty. He moved to Oxford in September 2014, after sixteen months as Director of Music at Peterborough Cathedral.

Robert was Organ Scholar of King's College, Cambridge, and subsequently a postgraduate student under John Butt. Since embarking on a full-time performing career in 2000 he has maintained a keen interest in academic music, with a particular research interest in J. S. Bach. This has combined with his performing work in a series of Bach recordings on the *Coro* label, of which *Gramophone* wrote 'Quinney's Bach gets to the heart of the music with refreshing clarity and a communication born of genuine understanding'.

Before moving to Peterborough in April 2013, Robert was, for almost nine years, Sub-Organist of Westminster Abbey, following four years as Assistant Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral. He accompanied those famous choirs in daily choral liturgies and on many recordings, international tours and broadcasts on radio and television. In April 2011 he played for the Marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, to an estimated television audience of two billion worldwide; the following year he was featured in the BBC2 documentary *Westminster Abbey*.

In addition to his Bach series, Robert Quinney has made critically acclaimed solo recordings of music by Elgar, Wagner, Brahms and Dupré, and appears as accompanist on a wide variety of choral CDs, principally with the choirs of Westminster Abbey and Westminster Cathedral and The Sixteen.