

A close-up, low-angle shot of numerous organ pipes, likely from the Royal Festival Hall organ. The pipes are arranged in a dense, vertical stack, with some showing signs of wear and discoloration. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the metallic textures and creating deep shadows. The background is dark, making the pipes stand out.

London Philharmonic Orchestra

POULENC
ORGAN CONCERTO

SAINT-SAËNS
SYMPHONY NO. 3 (ORGAN)

YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN *conductor*

JAMES O'DONNELL *organ*

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Recorded on the **Royal Festival Hall organ**
at London's Southbank Centre

POULENC

CONCERTO IN G MINOR FOR ORGAN, STRINGS AND TIMPANI

Andante – Allegro giocoso – Andante moderato
– Tempo Allegro, molto agitato –
Très calme: Lent – Tempo de l'Allegro initial –
Tempo d'introduction: Largo

When Francis Poulenc was growing up in Paris, the city was the centre of the art-music universe. Debussy had given birth to modernism here; Stravinsky had unleashed his game-changing *Rite of Spring* here. All the way from the streets of Harlem on the other side of the Atlantic, the intoxicating rhythms of jazz had found their way here too.

The latter proved particularly influential among a group of Parisian composers who established something of a counter-culture. As a reaction against the big, bold gestures of Debussy and Stravinsky (and indeed Hector Berlioz), the composers who formed the collective 'Les Six' erred towards the light-hearted and of-the-moment in their music. Poulenc was one of them, but in a sense he was also the exception. He subscribed to the group's quest for directness of expression and slimmed-down musical textures, but a certain depth and darkness lay behind Poulenc's work that has undoubtedly contributed to its longevity.

The Organ Concerto bears that theory out. Poulenc described the piece as 'grave and austere', but it launches with a wildly tongue-in-cheek refraction of music then two centuries old: the opening organ motif is a spiked, discordant reference to the organ's godfather, Johann Sebastian Bach. As it proceeds through seven connected sections, the piece embraces a far wider range of emotions than Poulenc's two previous keyboard concertos had. As in, for example, the second section, *Allegro giocoso*, which appears to jerk the organ out of the church and into the fairground – from one traditional home to another. There's tenderness in the ensuing *Andante moderato*, the heart of the work and a movement that through antiphonal exchanges from organ and strings blossoms into something almost Romantic. It could have been this movement that prompted Poulenc to leap up onto the stage during an early rehearsal of the piece and ask the strings to imagine they were playing the famous 'Méditation' from Massenet's ultra-Romantic opera *Thaïs*. But the mischievous prankster of Poulenc's youth is back in the rhapsodic chase of the *Tempo Allegro*, which cranks upwards through a series of doom-laden Mozartian intervals before what feels like another (and a now more respectful) homage to Bach in the air-like movement *Très calme*.

SAINT-SAËNS

SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN C MINOR (ORGAN)

The composer himself described the Organ Concerto as 'Poulenc on the way to the cloister', and the clearest vision of his return to Catholicism – prompted by the sudden death of a colleague – is arguably found in the Concerto's final pages. The sardonic opening gesture returns, but then rocking phrases from the organ preface a sort of muted procession as a solo viola overlays a bed of breathy, sensuous organ chords. The piece was first performed by soloist Maurice Duruflé and strings from the Orchestre de Paris in 1938 at the home of its commissioner the Princesse Edmond de Polignac (otherwise known as Winaretta Singer, she of sewing machine fame). 'Its profound beauty haunts me', remarked the princess after that performance, and it could well have been those beatific final pages that made it so.

- I *Adagio – Allegro moderato – Poco adagio*
- II *Allegro moderato – Presto – Maestoso – Allegro*

Francis Poulenc remained outside his country's venerable tradition of building, playing and writing music for organs. But his predecessor by a generation, Camille Saint-Saëns, was part of that tradition's furniture. Saint-Saëns spent two decades as organist of the church of La Madeleine in Paris, where he played an instrument built by Aristide Cavallé-Coll, the engineer who invented the circular saw and effectively established the tradition of 'symphonic' organ composing (and playing) in France by mechanical means.

The organ, though, probably wasn't the first thing on Saint-Saëns's mind when he came to write his Third Symphony. The piece was written for the London Philharmonic Society and the first performance, under the composer's direction, was at St James's Hall in London on 19 May 1886. The organ there wasn't French and it wasn't particularly big either. Saint-Saëns actually advised that a harmonium be used if an organ wasn't available, which says a thing or two about his concept.

A concerto this isn't; the organ is really only used to throw in some transitional chords and colour the orchestral conversation.

The latter fact is particularly relevant. Saint-Saëns expressed his desire 'to take advantage of advances in modern instrumentation' in his Third Symphony and the use of the organ (not named in the Symphony's original title) was but one element of that. Another, and an arguably more interesting one, was the composer's use of a piano within the orchestra, played by two pianists.

'Though this Symphony is divided into two parts, it does comprise in principle the four traditional movements', wrote Saint-Saëns of the piece, adding that by avoiding the Germanic tradition of thematic development he 'sought to avoid somewhat interminable repeats and repetitions that are tending to disappear from instrumental music'. In a sense, though, the composer does 'develop' his themes, and in quite a remarkable way. Following the example of Liszt (to whom the Symphony was dedicated), Saint-Saëns took a single musical 'motto' and transformed it as his Symphony proceeded.

That motto is first heard courtesy of the nervous string semiquavers that follow the Symphony's slow introduction. It's this very theme – transformed into the major – that forms the 'big tune' of the Symphony's finale, famously thrust out on huge organ chords. The motto appears in numerous guises in between, often changing character chameleon-like according to its dramatic or musical surroundings. Similarly the organ itself: it's exhilarating in those final pages, but appears to speak in confidence in the mystical dialogue with divided strings that comes earlier on.

The motto theme is derived from the *Dies Irae* plainsong beloved of Liszt, and all Saint-Saëns's themes, even the transitional and incidental, have a Lisztian cut and a propulsive, dramatic swagger. On top of what is effectively Saint-Saëns's harmonic conservatism and reliance on the complex counterpoint between concurrent themes, it makes for a piece of mouth-watering clarity, purpose and narrative depth. Or, in the words of Marcel Proust, 'the most beautiful of symphonies since Beethoven's'.

Programme notes © Andrew Mellor

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL ORGAN

by William McVicker, Southbank Centre Organ Curator

Both the works on this disc were recorded during Southbank Centre's *Pull Out All The Stops* festival launching the refurbished Royal Festival Hall organ, complete for the first time since 2005.

When the first details were published of the proposed new organ for London's Royal Festival Hall, letters appeared in the pages of newspapers and music journals criticising it before even a note had been heard; in an article in *The Times* in March 1954, days before the opening, 'Our Music Critic' predicted that the 'tax-payer's organ' would introduce a repertoire of strange new words – 'mixture', 'mutation', 'harmonics', 'partials' – and described it disparagingly as a 'large' and 'expensive' instrument.

Sixty years on these issues are not as contentious as they once were; this instrument caused a reassessment of English organ design and had a far-reaching impact on organ-building culture. How was it that the project consultant and organ builders came to produce such a radical scheme?

Organ Reform Movement

Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) had asked some far-reaching questions concerning the state of what was then contemporary organ-building in Europe (c.1900). His research gave rise to a conference in Freiburg in 1926 which sought to re-establish the principles of good organ-building. The 17th- and 18th-century instruments of the 'classic' period were rediscovered, and organ builders began to attempt to copy the sounds of these instruments – notably those built by Arp Schnitger (1648–1719) and Gottfried Silbermann (1683–1753). This German organ revival became known as the *Orgelbewegung*. The seeds of this movement spread to America and it was there that Ralph William Downes (1904–93), the designer of the Royal Festival Hall organ, first encountered this burgeoning philosophy. After taking his degree at Oxford, Downes became Musical Director and organist at Princeton University's new chapel in 1928. When he returned to London in 1936, as organist of the Brompton Oratory, he rapidly established a reputation as a musician with what was (at that time) a rare interest in historical performance practice.



Commissioning the Organ

Downes was resident organist for the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and in 1948 was commissioned by the London County Council (LCC) to design an organ for the Royal Festival Hall. From the very outset Downes sought an instrument that returned to some of the tonal design principles of the 17th and 18th century. He sought an organ that could do justice to the finest contrapuntal music – that of Johann Sebastian Bach and the North German school – and in order to do this he was particularly interested in characterful organ stops and architectural choruses of ‘clean’ sound, topped by what are known as brilliant ‘mixture’ stops – a characteristic that critics of his scheme loosely railed on as ‘continental’ or ‘Baroque’.

1951 Festival of Britain

We have a tendency to look back through history to the inauguration of the Royal Festival Hall organ without appreciating that it was born from the aspirations of the Festival of Britain in 1951; that the organ took four years to construct tends to separate it from the revolutionary thinking that underpinned that Festival – an event inspired by the Great Exhibition of 1851 as well as the Stockholm Exhibition of 1930. The Festival promised

revitalisation for post-war Britain: everything was to be new; it represented the future through invention, colour and excitement – a veritable ‘beacon for change’; it embraced a spirit of imagination and adventure, which is wholly reflected in Downes’s thinking. The inquisitive architectural spirit of the age owed much to continental design – both Italian and Scandinavian. The Royal Festival Hall instrument’s concept, design and construction thus accorded with the ideals of the Festival, and, in Downes’s own words, it was built ‘to embody excellence in quality of materials, workmanship [and] artistry.’

Opposition to the Organ

Downes’s ideas met with opposition from several ‘establishment’ figures – notably Sir George Dyson, Sir George Thalben-Ball, Sir Malcolm Sargent and Dr Ralph Vaughan Williams; but there were others in favour of his revivalist scheme: Benjamin Britten, Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Jack Westrup (Professor of Music at the University of Oxford), and G Donald Harrison (an organ-builder who championed the ‘American Classic’ organ). Those objectors focused on the ‘continental’ or ‘Baroque’ influence – a sound that was utterly abhorrent to Ralph Vaughan Williams,

who wrote a letter to *The Times* in 1951, stating: 'I admit that we have some bad organs in Britain, but at their worst they cannot surely make so nasty a noise as those on the Continent.' Passions clearly ran high: why should a nation struggling to rebuild itself after the war now accept Teutonic stop names, or worry about whether this organ was suitable for the music of a 'foreign' composer such as Bach? Finally it was agreed that the objections were differences in taste and Downes's scheme was modified slightly, adopted and built. Harrison & Harrison Ltd of Durham was chosen (on account of their excellent workmanship) to undertake the task of constructing the instrument to a ground-breaking specification. His scheme required the firm to construct pipework in a style virtually unknown in England. The mathematical processes for the calculation of the pipe scales (the relationship of diameter to length) and the processes for the voicing (the regulation of each pipe's tone) of the pipes (the so-called 'open-foot' technique) were new to Harrison & Harrison, who stuck religiously to Downes's scheme.

The Royal Festival Hall instrument thus occupies a pivotal position in the history of the English organ and was effectively the first

'neo-classical' British organ to reflect a desire to serve a wide range of earlier keyboard repertoires. Its construction heralded the arrival of the Organ Reform Movement in England.

The Organ's Appearance

It is well known that the organ's appearance is something of an accident. Some thought that a 'town hall' symmetrical array of large organ pipes – including some copper pipes – would be appropriate, whilst others thought that a grille covering the entire opening (in the manner of the cinema organs of the time) would suffice. The leader of the London County Council (LCC) and Chairman of the South Bank Committee, Isaac Haywood, resolved the deadlock: 'We are paying for all these expensive pipes and we want to see them as a decorative feature of the Hall'. Almost overnight the organ's internal layout (initially assumed to be hidden from view) became the exposed pipework we see today. Its very imaginative appearance stunned audiences at the time. For those unaccustomed to looking at organ cases and pipe-façades, this instrument's 'open-plan' character provides a strong backdrop behind the world's great orchestras and sits at the

very heart of the Hall's architecture. It is noteworthy that the open-plan design of the Royal Festival Hall instrument was adopted for a number of subsequent modernist English organ designs, notably at Coventry Cathedral (1962), Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral (1967) and Blackburn Cathedral (1968).

The Harrison & Harrison/Downes organ was opened on Wednesday 24 March 1954. The London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, performed a programme of works with Ralph Downes and André Marchal as soloists. This was followed, on Saturday 27 March, by a recital given by four of the most celebrated organists of the day: Downes, Arnold Richardson, Susi Jeans and George Thalben-Ball. *The Daily Mail* reported that it was 'a brilliant concert instrument worth all the £51,000 the LCC has paid for it ... it was a night of triumph for Mr Downes.'

Removal of the Organ

The Royal Festival Hall organ hosted the greatest players of the day and served the public for 50 years – with only minor modifications and regular maintenance. It was removed from the auditorium in preparation for the building's refurbishment, which took



place between 2005 and 2007; the organ now benefits from a more favourable acoustic – particularly noticeable in the lower frequency range of the instrument. While preparing for the refurbishment it became clear that significant improvements to the Royal Festival Hall auditorium would be possible within the constraints of the building's Grade I listing. The resulting changes in acoustics meant that nothing less than a complete remodelling of the instrument's structure would be required. The stage was to be enlarged and the volume of the organ chamber reduced in order to create much-needed choir seating and space on stage. After a full and open tender procedure, Harrison & Harrison Ltd was appointed to the project; the work sought to preserve the original tonal design (the organ's unique sound) and materials, and to retain the principles of the original layout. Preserving and respecting the musical style of the instrument was the main objective.

Change in Appearance

It was the instrument's visual appearance that presented the most significant challenge; considerable trouble has been taken to preserve its character. There was a clear principle on which the layout was based:

a differentiation between the foundation stops on the lower level and the (higher-pitched) upperwork and reed stops above. During the reinstallation several minor changes have been made to the organ's appearance:

- The front profile of the organ chamber was altered, reducing the depth of the central section and tapering out to the original depth at both ends.
- The organ's interior layout was rethought. The pipework within the louvered 'swell boxes' of the enclosed sections of the instrument was replanned to make better use of the space, thereby retaining the visual character of the unenclosed pipework.
- The organ had originally been set uncomfortably low in the chamber and the walnut band at lower level was altered in 1954 to allow the organ's pipes to be seen. This architectural glitch has been addressed: the soundboard (the chests upon which the pipes stand) levels have been raised and their relationships adjusted, in order to achieve a better visual balance.



- The acoustic redesign of the Royal Festival Hall auditorium has meant that it is now possible to view the full width of the organ chamber and all the pipes.
- One of the organ's chief visual characteristics is the famous 'monogram frontispiece' of dummy pipes, designed at a late stage by the Hall's deputy architect, (Sir) Leslie Martin (these are the copper and tin pipes in the centre, and the flanks of large wooden pipes). During the planning process the future of these pipes came under review. Second thoughts later prevailed, and it was decided that these characteristic designs deserved to be reinstated to their prominent place. Harrison & Harrison's design team was able to accommodate the 'monogram frontispiece' in the revised design.
- The depth for the instrument is now shallower so the original layout could not be reproduced exactly; better internal access was required within the organ for tuning and maintenance.
- In addition to the organ's strong horizontal appearance, there had been a series of important vertical elements – ten steel posts – which needed to be removed; the verticals of the new organ frame partly replace this upward thrust.
- The largest pipes of the 32ft flue and reed stops, on the extreme left and right edges of the organ respectively, originally appeared as a somewhat disorganised 'jumble of stalks in a jar'; these elements contrasted with the more regular appearance of the rest of the pipework. It was decided to re-arrange the largest pipes of the Principal ranks in a more formal manner on the instrument's left-hand side. In order to create visual balance, a new arrangement of Pedal 16ft Principal pipes was located immediately in front of the 32ft Pedal reed stops.
- The organ's console, originally slightly separated from the front of the organ, had caused problems during ballet productions, where dancers regularly caught their shins on the top of the console, which protruded from the set backstage. The console is now attached to the main structure of the organ.

Mechanics of the Organ

In most respects, the mechanical design of the organ remains exactly as completed in 1954. However, during the restoration, some minor changes were made:

- The organ's electro-pneumatic action (the mechanism through which the notes, played by the organist, cause the pipes to sound) has been retained and only three new soundboards (the chests upon which the pipes stand) have had to be constructed.
- All components of the instrument have been fully overhauled, including the 7,866 pipes, the slider chests (the matrix of holes in the soundboards that become aligned when the sliders move) and the 26 double-rise reservoirs that constitute the organ's wind system.
- New quieter electric slider-actions have replaced the original electro-pneumatic slider machines and the organ's key transmission (the mechanism through which the notes, played by the organist, causes the pipes to sound), electronic coupler (the mechanisms for coupling one keyboard function to another) and combination systems (the computer

processor that allows pre-set combinations of stops to be selected) have replaced the out-dated original equipment.

The first stage of the organ was installed ready for the reopening of the Hall in 2007. Seven years later the rest of the organ was finally completed.

The full story of the refurbishment of the Royal Festival Hall organ can be found in a new publication containing a series of essays on the recent work. The book, edited by William McVicker, is issued by the British Institute of Organ Studies (Journal Volume 38, published by Positif Press) in collaboration with Southbank Centre.

ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL ORGAN SPECIFICATION

PEDAL ORGAN

1. Principal (from 54)	32
2. Major Bass	16
3. Principal	16
4. Sub Bass	16
5. Quintadena (from 74)	16
6. Salicional (from 40)	16
7. Quintflute (stopped)	10½
8. Octave	8
9. Gedackt	8
10. Quintadena (from 74)	8
11. Nazard (conical)	5½
12. Superoctave	4
13. Spitzflute (conical)	4
14. Open Flute	2
15. Septerz 17.21	3½
16. Rauschquint 12.15	5½
17. Mixture 19.22.26.29.33	2½
18. Bombarde (from 19)	32
19. Bombarde	16
20. Dulzian (from 38)	16
21. Trumpet	8
22. Cromorne (from 52)	8
23. Clarion	4
24. Schalmei (from 53)	4
25. Cornett	2

I Positive and Choir to Pedal

II Great to Pedal

III Swell to Pedal

IV Solo to Pedal

POSITIVE ORGAN

26. Principal	8
27. Gedackt	8
28. Quintadena	8
29. Octave	4
30. Rohrflute	4
31. Rohrnazard	2½
32. Spitzflute (conical)	2
33. Tierce	1½
34. Larigot	1½
35. Mixture 15.19.22.26.29	2
36. Sharp Mixture 22.26.29.33.36	1
37. Carillon 29.38	½
38. Dulzian (in Choir box)	8
39. Trumpet (in Choir box)	8

V Tremulant

VI Positive on Great

VII Swell to Positive

VIII Solo to Positive

CHOIR ORGAN

(On Positive keys) (Enclosed)

40. Salicional	16
41. Open Wood	8
42. Stopped Wood	8
43. Salicional (conical)	8
44. Unda Maris (conical)	8
45. Spitzoctave (conical)	4
46. Open Flute	4
47. Principal	2
48. Quint	1½

49. Octave	1
50. Sesquialtera 26.31	¾
51. Mixture 29.33.36.40	½
52. Cromorne	8
53. Schalmei	4

IX Tremulant

X Choir on Solo

GREAT ORGAN

54. Principal	16
55. Gedacktpommer	16
56. Diapason	8
57. Principal	8
58. Harmonic Flute	8
59. Rohr Gedackt	8
60. Quintflute (stopped)	5½
61. Octave	4
62. Gemshorn (conical)	4
63. Quintadena	4
64. Quint	2½
65. Super Octave	2
66. Blockflute	2
67. Tierce	1½
68. Mixture 15.19.22.26.29	2
69. Sharp Mixture 26.29.33.36	¾
70. Cornet 1.8.12.15.17 (middle c)	8
71. Bombarde	16
72. Trumpet	8
73. Clarion	4

XI Sub Octave

XII Reeds and Cornet on Solo

XIII Positive and Choir to Great

XIV Swell to Great

XV Solo to Great

SWELL ORGAN

74. Quintadena	16
75. Diapason	8
76. Gemshorn (conical)	8
77. Quintadena	8
78. Viola	8
79. Celeste	8
80. Principal	4
81. Koppelflute	4
82. Nazard (conical)	2½
83. Octave	2
84. Open Flute	2

85. Tierce (tenor c)	1¾
86. Flageolet	1
87. Mixture 22.26.29.33	1
88. Cymbel 38.40.43	½
89. Hautboy	8
90. Vox Humana	8
<i>XVI Tremulant</i>	
91. Bombarde	16
92. Trumpet	8
93. Clarion	4

XVII Octave (16ft, 8ft and 4ft stops only)

XVIII Solo to Swell

SOLO ORGAN

(Enclosed)

94. Diapason	8
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95. Rohrflute	8
96. Octave	4
97. Waldflute (conical)	2
98. Rauschquint 12.15	2¾
99. Tertian 17.19	1¾
100. Mixture 19.22.22.26.29.33	1½
101. Basset Horn	16

XIX Tremulant

102. Harmonic Trumpet	8
103. Harmonic Clarion	4

COMBINATION COUPLERS

(rocking tablets)

XX Great and Pedal Combinations coupled

XXI Swell on General foot pistons

ACCESSORIES

Eight foot pistons to the Pedal Organ

Eight pistons to the Choir and Positive Organs (combined)

Eight pistons to the Great Organ (duplicated by foot pistons)

Eight pistons to the Swell Organ

Eight pistons to the Solo Organ

Eight general pistons and general cancel

Reversible pistons: I-IV, VII, VIII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVIII

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The pistons are instantly adjustable, with 8 divisional memories and 128 general memories.

The general crescendo pedal has one fixed and three adjustable settings.

The actions are electro-pneumatic.

The manual compass is 61 notes; the pedal compass is 32 notes.

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YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN *conductor*

© Marco Borggreve



Yannick Nézet-Séguin became Music Director of The Philadelphia Orchestra at the start of the 2012/13 season, and has been Music Director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra

since 2008. He was the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor from 2008–14. He has conducted all the major ensembles in his native Canada and has been Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain (Montreal) since 2000.

He also enjoys close partnerships with the Berliner Philharmoniker, Staatskapelle Berlin, Dresden Staatskapelle, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Wiener Philharmoniker and Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He has a regular presence at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris and the Konzerthaus Dortmund, the latter as Artist in Residence from the 2013/14 season.

As an opera conductor, he has appeared at the Salzburg Festival; Teatro alla Scala; Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Netherlands Opera; and Opéra de Montréal. He returns annually to the Metropolitan Opera, where in recent seasons he has conducted *Rusalka*, *La traviata* and *Don*

Carlo. In 2011 he embarked on a major Mozart opera series for the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin's most recent disc on the LPO Label is a recording of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* (LPO-0073). Recent additions to his extensive discography include *The Rite of Spring* with The Philadelphia Orchestra and a Tchaikovsky disc with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and Lisa Batiashvili, as well as the complete Schumann symphonies and *Così fan tutte* with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, all for Deutsche Grammophon. He has made recordings for EMI Classics and BIS Records, and continues to enjoy a close relationship with the Canadian label ATMA Classique.

A native of Montreal, Yannick Nézet-Séguin attended the Conservatoire de musique du Québec in Montreal and Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, before going on to study with renowned conductors, most notably the Italian maestro Carlo Maria Giulini. His honours include a prestigious Royal Philharmonic Society Award; Canada's highly coveted National Arts Centre Award; and the Prix Denise-Pelletier. He received an honorary doctorate from the University of Quebec in Montreal in 2011, and was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada in 2012.

JAMES O'DONNELL *organ*

© Clare Clifford



James O'Donnell is one of Britain's leading organists and choral conductors. Since 2000 he has been Organist and Master of the Choristers of Westminster Abbey, where he is responsible

for the direction of the music, both at the daily services and for the many national and state occasions that take place there. Recent highlights have included the wedding of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, the visit of Pope Benedict XVI, and concert tours to the Far East, Australia and the USA.

James O'Donnell studied as a Junior Exhibitioner at the Royal College of Music and then as Organ Scholar of Jesus College, Cambridge. After having served for six years as Assistant Master of Music, he was appointed Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral at the age of 26. Under his direction the Cathedral Choir won the *Gramophone* Record of the Year award with a Hyperion recording of Masses by Martin and Pizzetti and became the first choir to be honoured with a Royal Philharmonic Society Award (1999).

As an organist, James O'Donnell has appeared in concert all over the world, including the USA, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and throughout Europe and the UK, including appearances at the BBC Proms. He was President of the Royal College of Organists from 2011–13. He is Music Director of St James's Baroque and holds Visiting Professorships of Organ and Choral Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music, of which he was elected to Honorary Membership in 2002. He has been elected to Fellowship of the Royal College of Music and Honorary Fellowship of Jesus College, Cambridge. He has also been awarded the Papal honour of Knight Commander of St Gregory, and in 2013 received an honorary DMus from the University of Aberdeen.

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The London Philharmonic Orchestra is known as one of the world's great orchestras with a reputation secured by its performances in the concert hall and opera house, its many award-winning recordings, its trail-blazing international tours and its pioneering education work. Distinguished conductors who have held positions with the Orchestra since its foundation in 1932 by Sir Thomas Beecham include Sir Adrian Boult, Sir John Pritchard, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt, Franz Welser-Möst and Kurt Masur. Vladimir Jurowski was appointed the Orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor in March 2003 and became Principal Conductor in September 2007. The London Philharmonic Orchestra has been Resident Symphony Orchestra at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall since 1992 and there it presents its main series of concerts between September and

May each year. In summer, the Orchestra moves to Sussex where it has been Resident at Glyndebourne Festival Opera for 50 years. The Orchestra also performs at venues around the UK and has made numerous tours to America, Europe and Japan, and visited India, Hong Kong, China, South Korea, Australia, South Africa and Abu Dhabi.

The London Philharmonic Orchestra made its first recordings on 10 October 1932, just three days after its first public performance. It has recorded and broadcast regularly ever since, and in 2005 established its own record label. These recordings are taken mainly from live concerts given by conductors including LPO Principal Conductors from Beecham and Boult, through Haitink, Solti and Tennstedt, to Masur and Jurowski. lpo.org.uk



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The Guardian

FRANCIS POULENC (1899–1963)

22:38 Concerto in G minor for Organ, Strings and Timpani

- | | | |
|----|------|--------------------------------|
| 01 | 3:14 | Andante – |
| 02 | 2:05 | Allegro giocoso – |
| 03 | 7:20 | Andante moderato – |
| 04 | 2:36 | Tempo Allegro, molto agitato – |
| 05 | 2:28 | Très calme: Lent – |
| 06 | 1:55 | Tempo de l'Allegro initial – |
| 07 | 3:00 | Tempo d'introduction: Largo |

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS (1835–1921)

34:47 Symphony No. 3 in C minor (Organ)

- | | | |
|----|-------|---------------------------------|
| 08 | 9:42 | I. Adagio – Allegro moderato – |
| 09 | 10:30 | Poco adagio |
| 10 | 7:03 | II. Allegro moderato – Presto – |
| 11 | 7:32 | Maestoso – Allegro |

YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN *conductor*

JAMES O'DONNELL *organ*

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Pieter Schoeman *leader*

Recorded live at **SOUTHBANK CENTRE'S ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL**