

Jacquet's Ghost



Stephen Farr

The Organ of Trinity College, Cambridge

Jacquet's Ghost

The Metzler organ of Trinity College, Cambridge

Stephen Farr *organ*

with

Members of Sidney Sussex College Chapel Choir ²
David Skinner (director)

About Stephen Farr:

*'[...] Farr] brought an inventive flair to his choice of registers,
offering a reading of notable light and shade'*
Tempo

*'[...] superbly crafted, invigorating performances, combining youthful vigour and
enthusiasm with profound musical insight and technical fluency'*
Gramophone

Huw Watkins (b. 1976)

1. **Pièce d'Orgue *** [5:19]

Alexandre P. F. Boëly (1785-1858)

2. **Kyrie** (from *Messe solennelle pour l'orgue
extraite de plusieurs auteurs anciens*) [8:46]

Jehan Alain (1911-1940)

3. **Variations sur un thème de
Clément Jannequin**, AWW 99 [6:03]

Judith Bingham (b. 1952)

Jacquet's Ghost (2012) *
4. Tombeau [2:09]
5. Labyrinthe [2:11]
6. Pastorelle somnambule [1:24]
7. Envoi [1:50]

William Albright (1944-1998)

8. **Chorale-Partita in an Old Style on
"Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten"** [10:53]

Lionel Rogg (b. 1936)

9. **Ricercare Cromatico ***
(from *Omaggio a Frescobaldi*) [5:11]

Hugo Distler (1908-1942)

10. **Partita und Satz "Jesu Christus,
unser Heiland, der von uns den
Gotteszorn wandt"** [7:06]

Jon Laukvik (b. 1952)
11. **Monody with Variations *** [5:56]

Bernard Foccroulle (b. 1953)
12. **Spiegel *** [10:16]

Total playing time [67:12]

* world premiere recording



The Metzler organ of Trinity College, Cambridge (1975)

Jacquet's Ghost

'It should be possible for a musician of the twentieth century to retain the spirit of this earlier music. Idiom does not matter [...] by the simple game of 'musical spelling' one should be able to pass imperceptibly from one to the other [...]

These remarks of Jehan Alain, written in an autograph source of the *Variations sur un thème de Clément Jannequin*, are far from a manifesto: there are few composers for the instrument less likely to wield such a blunt instrument. But their fundamental message – that old and modern idioms can be close, not distant, relations – is one explored by all the music in this programme.

The catalyst for Alain's work is a sixteenth-century chanson, *L'espoir que j'ay d'acquérir vostre grâce*, erroneously attributed to Clément Jannequin by the anthologist Jean-Baptiste Weckerlin, who was also responsible for numerous editorial modifications to the original chanson. Alain adheres closely to Weckerlin's altered version of the theme, but the second variation, curiously entitled 'Maggiore' – it is anything but – sees the process of alteration begin; the theme is re-stated a perfect fifth higher, and intervals become more complex over a less simply

functional bass line. The extended fugato that follows takes this process of complication further, interleaving a secondary idea of increasing angularity and chromatic intensity between the fugal treatments of the theme and moving rapidly through a series of keys. The concluding 'Grave' follows a similar process in microcosm, re-emphasising the tonal centres of the home key before recapitulating fragments of the theme in triple, rather than duple time.

Alain (whose performance markings here, as in other works, are often contradictory and inconsistent) specifies throughout the work the use of sonorities typical of the French Classical school, a preoccupation with tone colour which links the *Variations* to the work of Hugo Distler. The more general aesthetic resemblances between Distler and Alain have sometimes been overstated; indeed, one study by François Sabatier suggests that they share little common ground beyond an interest in early music and in writing for organ and voice. Distler, inspired by the range of sonorities available on the historic Stellwagen instrument of the Jakobikirche in Lübeck where he was organist, drew heavily on the influence of Buxtehude and the North German Baroque idiom. Deploing the cosmopolitan cultural influences so enthusiastically embraced by Alain, and eschewing the Romantic symphonic tradition, he left an oeuvre notable for its

intellectual rigour, firmly rooted in the procedures and preoccupations of an earlier generation of German composers and characterised by intensive use of motivic and figurative development. The *Partita und Satz "Jesus Christus unser Heiland, der von uns den Gotteszorn wandt"* displays these aspects of Distler's aesthetic clearly; more an extended fantasia than a simple set of variations, it consists of a contrapuntal chorale setting, bicinium (two part invention) and intricately worked *ricercare*. Appended to the whole is a virtuosic peroration owing much to models from the seventeenth century.

The figural devices of the German Baroque also constitute an important element in William Albright's *Chorale Partita in an Old Style*. It is an early work, but the composer drew on the musical procedures of the period elsewhere in his organ music; the *Basse de Trompette* in *Organ Book III*, for example, is inspired by the forms, if not the musical language, of the French Classical school of organ composition. Unlike that work, this partita, based on the chorale 'Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten' (a melody familiar from its inclusion in J.S. Bach's 'Schübler' chorales) is a sustained homage to earlier models, not only in terms of formal design, but also in aspects of rhythmic figuration, scoring, and registration. In his maturity Albright viewed this work as

something of a manifesto; it was published at a time when, in his own words, 'more and more composers [were] rejecting the necessity of a linear progression of musical language'. In keeping with Albright's stated intention of recapturing a past idiom, the music is characterised by both a sense of austerity and notable motivic integrity. Albright's choice of the same tonality as Bach's setting of the chorale, C minor, may be construed as a further layer of allusion to earlier models. The characteristic dactyl rhythms of the Bach work are not used, but the texture and figuration of his final variation are closely related to the final variation of Bach's partita on 'Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig', BWV 768.

Alexandre Boëly's *Messe Solennelle* does not explore earlier idioms by means of allusion; instead, it offers a fresh perspective on them by juxtaposing them in an unaccustomed, indeed unintended, context. The *Messe*, from which the 'Kyrie' is performed here, adheres to the alternatim principle, a liturgical practice widespread in seventeenth and eighteenth century France in which organ interludes (often improvised) alternated with sung plainsong. Notable publications in this form included those of Nicolas de Grigny and François Couperin, whose two alternatim settings of the Mass Boëly himself copied out. Boëly – organist of St Germain l'Auxerrois in Paris – was an admirer of earlier music at a



time when it was wildly unfashionable to be so, and incorporates his own transcriptions of works by J.S. Bach, Johann Kirnberger, François Couperin and G.F. Handel into his compilation. His own brief contributions are of characteristic contrapuntal fluency and harmonic charm, even if the works by Bach and Handel seem, to modern sensibilities, curious choices for the penitential liturgical context. In the process of compiling this unique collection, Boëly offers an idiosyncratic nineteenth century perspective on older practice, which one commentator has happily characterised as a 'gallery [...] filled with ghosts'.

The 'ghost' of the French Classical school so greatly admired by Boëly, and more specifically its highly stylised musical gestures, are also a driving force in Judith Bingham's new work, *Jacquet's Ghost*. The inspiration for the piece is that most elusive of keyboard forms, the harpsichord prelude non mesuré (a genre to which, incidentally, Jehan Alain referred in remarks about the *Variations sur un thème de Clément Jannequin*). In préludes of this type, the player assumes a doubly creative role; while the composer indicates approximate note durations and groupings by means of slurs, many more precise details of rhythm and phrase structure are left to the judgement of the performer. Judith Bingham extends this tradition by

realising in expansive manner the original prélude (from the Première Suite by Elisabeth Claude Jacquet de la Guerre). The seventeenth century original is treated as a both a harmonic resource and a repertory of melodic fragments whose response to subtle chromatic inflection – the game of musical spelling, again – results in a composition which is rich in allusion to a range of contemporary keyboard practices. The titles of the movements – 'Tombeau', 'Labyrinthe', 'Pastorelle somnambule' and 'Envoi' – draw on numerous stimuli, some simply pictorial (the grotesquerie of the 'buffo' passages in 'Labyrinthe'), others more subtly allusive (including moments of self-quotation). The form of the original work – albeit greatly expanded – is adopted as a structural template, a strategy which gives the work a satisfying sense of formal proportion.

Bingham's work is both a homage to earlier compositional practice and an exploration of the unique tonal qualities of the Metzler organ in Trinity College; Bernard Foucroulle's *Spiegel* offers a further example of a composer's response to such stimuli in a work which also makes extensive use of the fragmentation and inflection of pre-existing thematic material. A double tribute to the medieval organist and theorist Arnolt von Schlick (whose treatise *Spiegel der Orgelmeister und Orgelmachen* provides





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the title of the piece) and to the remarkable 1511 van Covelens organ of the Laurenskerk in Alkmaar, Foucroulle's work, a set of variations on the plainsong *Salve Regina*, opposes contemporary musical language of notable rhythmic complexity with the performance possibilities (or limitations?) of early instruments. The work develops (in a highly stylised manner) several aspects of medieval compositional procedure, but also alludes more explicitly to two works by Schlick; his own versets on the *Salve Regina* and his 10-voice setting of *Ascendo ad Patrem* to which Foucroulle pays tribute in a final, rhythmically intricate, verset.

Jon Laukvik's *Monodie* expands the sphere of influence of earlier music from form and sound into the specifics of playing technique. A set of variations based on a technical exercise from Charles Tournemire's organ primer, it draws on the technical practices and preoccupations of both the Romantic and Baroque periods. The grand legato of the French Romantic tradition, exemplified in the Tournemire exercise on which the work is based, is juxtaposed with the articulation practice of the Baroque, the whole coloured by harmonic and metrical devices drawn from jazz.

As a performer, Lionel Rogg has been particularly closely associated with the organ

music of J.S. Bach, and the *Ricercare Cromatico* from the *Omaggio a Frescobaldi* occupies itself, perhaps unsurprisingly, with intricate contrapuntal matters. Treating a chromatic theme reminiscent of Ligeti's homage to the Italian composer, it employs stretto, augmentation and diminution, and inversion to generate increasing rhythmic tension. The lack of clear tonal centres inherent in the theme is finally resolved over a sustained pedal.

Huw Watkins' *Piece d'Orgue* does not make specific reference to earlier models of composition, but in its abstract nature, entirely free from programmatic considerations, and its meticulous development of motivic material, it refers back to the large-scale free forms of the Baroque and their particular compositional preoccupations. Its thematic material divides in to clear blocks; the opening figure of descending chords in a lilting rhythm is soon interrupted by two fortissimo seven-note chords. The music proceeds by juxtaposing these two different types of chordal material before a contrasting contrapuntal section in three parts – a slowly unfolding melody in the right hand, a repeated descending figure in the left hand and longer notes in the pedals. Subsequent development of the opening chordal ideas makes use of extreme dynamic before a second statement of the contrapuntal section.

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The Metzler organ of Trinity College, Cambridge (1975) containing pipework retained from earlier instruments installed by Father Smith in 1694 (Ruckpositiv) and 1708 (Hauptwerk).

Hauptwerk		Schwellwerk	
1. Principal *	16	23. Viola	8
2. Octave *	8	24. Suavial	8
3. Hohlflöte 8	8	25. Rohrflöte	8
4. Octave *	4	26. Principal	4
5. Spitzflöte	4	27. Gedacktflöte	4
6. Quinte *	2 2/3	28. Nasard	2 2/3
7. Superoctave *	2	29. Doublette	2
8. Sesquialter	III	30. Terz	1 3/5
9. Cornett	IV	31. Mixtur	IV
10. Mixtur	IV-V	32. Fagott	16
11. Trompete	8	33. Trompete	8
12. Vox Humana	8	Tremulant	
Rückpositiv		Pedal	
13. Principal *	8	34. Principal *	16
14. Gedackt	8	35. Subbass	16
15. Octave	4	36. Octavbass	8
16. Rohrflöte	4	37. Bourdon	8
17. Octave	2	38. Octave	4
18. Gemshorn	2	39. Mixtur	V
19. Larigot	1 1/3	40. Posaune	16
20. Sesquialter	II	41. Trompete	8
21. Scharf	III	42. Trompete	4
22. Dulcian	8		
Tremulant			

Couplers: R-H S-H H-P R-P S-P

* Father Smith ranks

Stephen Farr

Stephen Farr is Director of Music at St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, and at Worcester College, Oxford, posts which he combines with a varied career as soloist, continuo player, and conductor. He was Organ Scholar of Clare College, Cambridge, graduating with a double first in Music and an MPhil in musicology. He then held appointments at Christ Church, Oxford, and at Winchester and Guildford Cathedrals.

A former student of David Sanger and a prizewinner at international competition level, he has an established reputation as one of the leading recitalists of his generation, and has appeared in the UK in venues including the Royal Albert Hall (where he gave the premiere of Judith Bingham's *The Everlasting Crown* in the BBC Proms 2011); Bridgewater Hall; Symphony Hall, Birmingham; Westminster Cathedral; King's College, Cambridge; St Paul's Celebrity Series and Westminster Abbey: he also appears frequently on BBC Radio 3 as both performer and presenter.

He has performed widely in both North and South America (most recently as guest soloist and director at the Cartagena International Music Festival), in Australia, and throughout Europe.

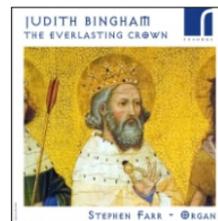
He has a particular commitment to contemporary music, and has been involved in premieres of works by composers including Patrick Gowers, Francis Pott and Robert Saxton; he also collaborated with Thomas Adès in a recording of *Under Hamelin Hill*, part of an extensive and wide-ranging discography.

His concerto work has included engagements with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra and the London Mozart Players; he made his debut in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw in 2005. He has also worked with many other leading ensembles including the Berlin Philharmonic (with whom he appeared in the premiere of Jonathan Harvey's *Weltethos* under Sir Simon Rattle in October 2011), Florilegium, the Bach Choir, Holst Singers, BBC Singers, Polyphony, The English Concert, London Baroque Soloists, City of London Sinfonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Wallace Collection, Endymion Ensemble, the Philharmonia, Academy of Ancient Music, Britten Sinfonia and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

A frequent recording artist, he made his debut on Resonus Classics with the premiere recording of Bingham's *The Everlasting Crown* (RES10108).

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