

Olivier Messiaen

La Nativité du Seigneur  
Offrande au Saint-Sacrement



*Sheva*

Andrew Canning

Ruffatti organ  
Uppsala Cathedral, Sweden

**Olivier Messiaen** (1908-1992) composed *La Nativité du Seigneur* (The Birth of the Lord) in the summer of 1935 in Grenoble near the French Alps. Messiaen wrote that in addition to theology, the movements were inspired by the mountains as well as stained glass windows in medieval cathedrals. The work received its first complete public performance at Eglise de la Saint-Trinite in Paris on 27th February 1936 and the performance was shared by three distinguished organists - Daniel-Lesur, Jean Langlais and Jean-Jacques Grunenwald.

**La Nativité du Seigneur** consists of nine movements, or meditations, each of which is preceded by a quotation from the Bible that corresponds to the theological content.

*La Vierge et l'enfant* (The Virgin and child)

"Conceived of a Virgin, unto us a child is born, for unto us a Son is given. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh unto thee, He is just and lowly."

*Les Bergers* (The Shepherds)

"Having seen the child lying in the manger, the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God."

*Desseins éternels* (Eternal purposes)

"God, in His love, has predestined us into the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself, to the praise and the glory of His grace."

*Le Verbe* (The Word)

"The Lord hath said unto me: Thou art my Son. In His bosom, before the dawn existed, He begat me. I am the image of the goodness of God, I am the Word of life, that which was from the beginning."

*Les enfants de Dieu* (The children of God)

"But as many received Him, the Word gave them the power to become the Sons of God. And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts crying, Abba! Father!"

*Les Anges (The Angels)*

"And there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying glory to God in the highest."

*Jésus accepte la souffrance (Jesus accepts suffering)*

"Wherefore when He cometh into the world He said unto His Father: 'Sacrifice and offering you wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared me. Lo, I come!'"

*Les Mages (The Wise Men)*

"The wise men departed, and the star went before them."

*Dieu parmi nous (God among us)*

"Words of the communicant, the Virgin and of the whole church: He who created me has rested in my house, the Word was made flesh and it has dwelt in me. My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour."

**Offrande au Saint-Sacrement** (Offering to the Blessed Sacrament) was discovered posthumously in 1997 by Messiaen's wife, the pianist Yvonne Loriod. This short work was probably composed during the 1930s.

*Recorded in Uppsala Cathedral, Sweden on 12th and 13th September 2016 by Pär Fridberg using 1 Pearl DS60 4-channel microphone in MS, 2 Pearl ELM-A microphones for omni, RME OctaMic XTC microphone amplifier, RME UFX sound interface, ProTools software.*

*Produced by Pär Fridberg and Andrew Canning.*

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*Special thanks to Birgit Lindqvist Markström*

*Front cover artwork: 'Spirited Space'. Original artwork by Niall Thurrat © 2007*



### *Fratelli Ruffatti*

*Famiglia Artigiana, Pipe Organ Builders of Padova, Italy.*

*The firm of Fratelli Ruffatti was founded in Padova, Italy in 1940. The factory grew very rapidly after the Second World War, reaching a total of 90 employees. During the 50s and 60s, very important instruments were produced, the most famous of which is the five manual organ for the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal and the six manual organ for the Basilica of Monreale near Palermo, Italy.*

*In the late 60s Ruffatti's market expanded from Italy and neighbouring countries to the USA and Canada. Several large electro-pneumatic were built for churches and cathedrals. At the same time, Ruffatti continued to build mechanical action organs in the classical Italian tradition.*

*Today the firm is owned and operated by Francesco and Piero Ruffatti, sons of the firm's founder Antonio Ruffatti. Well over five hundred instruments have been built for Italy, Portugal, Lebanon, Serbia, Nigeria, South Korea, China, Australia, the US, Mexico, Sweden and Canada, fifty of which are for the United States alone. Notable installations include the five manual organ for the Crystal Cathedral, Garden Grove, California, the four manual organ for St. Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco, California, the five manual organ for Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, the five manual organ for the San Francisco Symphony Hall, and the recent four manual organ for Uppsala Cathedral, Sweden.*

**GREAT**

Principal 16'  
 Montre 8'  
 Principal 8'  
 Flute harmonique 8'  
 Octave 4'  
 Waldflöte 4'  
 Super octave 2'  
 Cornet V 8'  
 Mixture IV 1 1/3'  
 Trumpet 16'  
 Trumpet 8'  
 Trompette en chamade 8' (Solo)  
 Clairon 4'

**SWELL** (enclosed)

Bourdon 16'  
 Principal 8'  
 Rohrflöte 8'  
 Salicional 8'  
 Voix celeste 8'  
 Octave 4'  
 Flute 4'  
 Nasard 2 2/3'  
 Piccolo 2'  
 Tierce 1 3/5'  
 Mixture V 2'  
 Bombarde 16'  
 Trompette 8'  
 Trompette en chamade 8' (Solo)  
 Oboe 8'  
 Clairon 4'  
 Tremulant

**CHOIR** (enclosed)

Principal 8'  
 Dulciána 8'  
 Gedackt 8'  
 Flute douce 8'  
 Octave 4'  
 Koppelflöte 4'  
 Nasard 2 2/3'  
 Doublette 2'

Tierce 1 3/5'  
 Quinte 1 1/3'  
 Mixture IV 1'  
 Clarinet 8'  
 Trompette en chamade 8' (Solo)  
 Tremulant  
 Cymbelstern

**SOLO** (enclosed)

Concert flute 8'  
 Labial clarinet 8'  
 Viole d'orchestre 8'  
 Viole celeste 8'  
 Octave viole 4'  
 Cor anglais 16'  
 Vox humana 8'  
 Tremulant  
 Tuba 8' (unenclosed)  
 Trompette en chamade 8' (unenclosed)  
 Glockenspiel (unenclosed) 37 tuned bells c-c3

**PEDAL**

Subbass 32'  
 Principal 16'  
 Open Wood 16'  
 Subbass 16'  
 Bourdon 16' (Swell)  
 Octave 8'  
 Flute 8'  
 Choralbass 4'  
 Flute 4'  
 Mixture IV 2 2/3'  
 Trombone 32'  
 Trombone 16'  
 Bombarde 16' (Swell)  
 Trumpet 8'  
 Trompette en chamade 8' (Solo)  
 Clairon 4'

**Manual compass 61 notes, C-c4**

**Pedal compass 32 notes, C-g1**

The instrument is controlled by either of two four-manual draw-stop consoles made of solid European oak, with adjustable key desks. (The keyboards and stop-jambs can travel up and down electrically by about 12 cm.) The console located in the Nave is mobile and is connected to the instrument via a miniscule fiber optic cable.

Swedish pine has been imported to Italy, highly seasoned and used for the manufacturing of the entire casework and expression enclosures, which are of massive construction, featuring 5 cm (2 inch) thick walls and louvers. The windchests, most of which are of the mechanical slider type, are built with African Sipo mahogany, a wood which is known for its beauty and also for its remarkable stability under difficult environmental conditions. Sipo mahogany has also been used for all of the wooden pipes and in particular for the massive Pedal 32' Subbass and 32' Trombone.

All the metal pipes have been manufactured in the Ruffatti workshop utilizing tin/lead alloys ranging from 95% tin (for all facade pipes, including the 16' Pedal Principal, and all the internal pipes in the 16' and 8' range) to 30% tin for the flutes. Most of them are cone-tuned, while the larger facade and internal pipes are equipped with tuning scrolls.

The highest attention to quality details is a characteristic of the Ruffatti workshop. An example is the construction of all wooden pipes, from the largest 32' pipes to the smallest of the 8' Gedackt, all featuring tongue-and-groove joints and inside lacquer treatment to achieve a better resonance.

A very handy radio-controlled portable tuning device has been provided. It allows the tuner to play each stop and note from inside the organ, thus eliminating the need for an assistant at the console.

The complicated winding system features two blowers, state-of-the-art wind regulators and about 60 metres of solid mahogany wind ducts.

*Fratelli Ruffatti*



*photo by Pär Fridberg*

**Andrew Canning** is one of the leading organists of his generation. He was born in London and studied organ with David Sanger and Christopher Bowers-Broadbent at the Royal Academy of Music. In 1984 he won first prize at the West of England Organ Festival Competition, and in 1990 he was awarded the Silver Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. Following appointments at Westminster Abbey and St. Marylebone Church in London, he moved to Sweden in 1991 where he spent five years as organist of the Västana församling parish in Fagersta.

In 1996 Andrew was appointed Assistant Organist and Director of Music at Uppsala Cathedral and in 2001, Organist to Uppsala University (the first such ever appointment made in Sweden). Between 1996 and 2002 he was artistic director of Uppsala Cathedral Boys' Choir and led the choir on several successful tours to Finland, Spain and Poland.

Andrew is now chiefly responsible for the cathedral's regular recital series and the accompaniment of the liturgy in the cathedral's daily offices.

As an organ soloist he has broadcast many times on American, Swedish, Finnish, German and Dutch radio and television, and performs regularly all over Europe, Japan, China, Russia and the USA.

# Olivier Messiaen (1908 -1992)

## La Nativité du Seigneur - Offrande au Saint-Sacrement

### La Nativité du Seigneur

- [1] La Vierge et l'enfant (*The Virgin and child*) 6:32
- [2] Les Bergers (*The Shepherds*) 5:55
- [3] Desseins éternels (*Eternal purposes*) 4:43
- [4] Le Verbe (*The Word*) 13:30
- [5] Les enfants de Dieu (*The children of God*) 3:47
- [6] Les Anges (*The Angels*) 3:18
- [7] Jésus accepte la souffrance (*Jesus accepts suffering*) 4:10
- [8] Les Mages (*The Wise Men*) 7:22
- [9] Dieu parmi nous (*God among us*) 8:28
- [10] **Offrande au Saint-Sacrement** (*Offering to the Blessed Sacrament*) 6:23

*total timing 65:27*

### Andrew Canning

Ruffatti organ Uppsala Cathedral, Sweden

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