

charles villiers

stanford

organ works
volume 2

simon niemiński

organ of
freemasons' hall, edinburgh

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

Organ Works Volume 2

Simon Niemiński *organ*

The Brindley & Foster organ of
Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh

About Simon Niemiński:

'A superlative performance of the highest quality'
The Organ

'[...] performed with taste and sensitivity. There is a lot of poetry here.'
American Record Guide

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1. Marcia Eroica , Op. 189, No. 2 | [5:30] |
| 2. The Angelus , Op. 194, No. 3 * | [6:44] |
| 3. Te Deum Laudamus , Fantasia, Op. 116 | [8:14] |
| 4. Fantasia (In Festo Omnium Sanctorum) , Op. 121, No. 1 | [7:17] |
| 5. Idyll , Op. 121, No. 2 | [7:31] |
| 6. Prelude in form of a Minuet , Op. 88, No. 1 | [5:10] |
| 7. Prelude in form of a Toccata , Op. 88, No. 3 | [3:30] |
| 8. Prelude in form of a Pastorale , Op. 88, No. 5 | [6:12] |
| 9. Prelude on the ancient melody 'Jesu dulcis memoriae' * | [4:09] |
| Organ Sonata No. 1 in F , Op. 149 | |
| 10. Allegro | [4:14] |
| 11. Tempo di menuetto | [3:58] |
| 12. Allegro maestoso | [5:31] |
| Total playing time | [68:05] |

* *world premiere recording*



The 1913 Brindley & Foster organ of Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh – originally modelled closely on the organ case in St Stephen's, Walbrook, London; the Grand Lodge casework was carved by Scott Morton & Co.

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) Organ Works, Volume 2

Despite Charles Villiers Stanford's many and celebrated exploits as an organist – most notably as an organ scholar of Queens' College, and later as the organist of Trinity College, in Cambridge – his solo compositions for the instrument are not the most prolific part of his extensive output as a composer. While not the most abundant part of Stanford's productivity, they are certainly not an insubstantial part – dominated by the five organ sonatas written in the later years of his life, his organ works are evenly spread throughout the his active life as a composer. Indeed, the organ continued to provide inspiration throughout his entire career, from the earliest Prelude and Fugue in E minor (composed c. 1875, published 1876) through to the charming Three Idylls, Op. 194, the final movement of which, 'The Angelus', is included here.

The earliest work of this collection, **Prelude on the ancient melody 'Jesu dulcis memoriae'**, dates from November 1879. It remained unpublished during Stanford's lifetime, not making it to print until as late as 1982 when it was published by Chiltern Music in an edition by Richard Barnes. (A further edition was made by

Andrew McCrea some years later, published by the Royal College of Organists in 1994). The Latin hymn *Jesu dulcis memoria* was traditionally used at Vespers on the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, and is part of much longer text. In Stanford's prelude, the hymn melody can be heard in a fragmented cantus firmus in the pedals, while forming the basis of the musical material performed on the manuals.

Stanford completed his Six Preludes, Op. 88, in June 1903 and they were originally published in *The Vocalist* magazine over two years from 1903, before being published by the German publishing house of Breitkopf & Härtel in 1905. All but two of the six preludes were prefaced 'Prelude in form of' and included in this collection are **Prelude in form of a Minuet** (No. 1), **Prelude in form of a Toccata** (No. 3) and **Prelude in form of a Pastorale** (No. 5) – the remaining preludes being Prelude in form of a Chaconne (No. 2), Prelude on the Easter Hymn (No. 4) and Prelude on "Tallis's Canon" (No. 6). All of the three preludes contained here are relatively short but all represent a huge diversity of character, each with a hint of pastiche.

Stanford's Op. 10 Service in B flat was among his earliest completed and published works; the almost ubiquitously popular *Te Deum* in

B flat from was composed alongside its partner *Jubilate* in May 1879, with the rest of the service (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Benedictus, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis) completed later the same year. In around 1909 Stanford penned his **Te Deum Laudamus, Fantasia and Canzona**, Op. 116 partly based on material from this choral setting of the *Te Deum*; this was a fairly slim year for Stanford, his output consisting of his Service in C, Op, 115 and this work. In the opening Fantasia, included here, great economy of material is demonstrated, with the entire work based on the opening four note figure from the organ introduction of the choral *Te Deum* (F-G-F-B flat), itself formed from a plainsong intonation. While the similarities are clear in the very opening notes, the two *Te Deums* continue in quite different directions and with quite different material – the chordal extended grand introduction is split by a toccata-like flurry, before a more flowing calm pastoral which dominates much of the work. The opening chordal material recurs, however, in an imposing and majestic finish typical of many of Stanford's organ works.

Composed in December 1910, the **Fantasia (In Festo Omnium Sanctorum) and Idyll**, Op. 121 were published by G. Schirmer the following year. At the

foot of the published score is a note that states the work was 'Founded on an original Hymn-tune by the same composer in the new edition of "Hymns Ancient and Modern"'. In a similar fashion to the *Te Deum* Fantasia, the musical material for the Fantasia is derived mainly from the instantly recognisable opening line of the hymn-tune, which is stated at the very outset in the pedals. The melody experiences a wide variety of variations, with each episode taking the listener on a musical journey including toccata-like sections, broader and chordal parts and a more serene pastoral central section. The Fantasia concludes with an indulgent and lavishly harmonised version of the original hymn tune in its entirety. Based on entirely different material, the *Idyll* is in stark contrast to the Fantasia, with the tender mood based around the opening figure once more, and characterised by a recurring, but gentle, syncopation.

The first of five substantial organ sonatas composed in a short period between by Stanford between May 1917 and May 1918, his **Organ Sonata No. 1 in F**, Op. 149, came relatively late in his life. As a collection, the organ sonatas belong to one of the most creative periods of his life, which saw an incredible amount of productivity between around 1917 and 1922. Among the huge output from these five years are his second



Simon Niemiński at the console of Freemasons' Hall organ



violin concerto, his third piano concerto, his two Irish Rhapsodies and his seventh string quartet amongst a great many other orchestral works, songs, chamber and instrumental works and choral settings.

Dedicated to his 'old friend Alan Gray', who had succeeded him as organist of Trinity College, the sonata is laid out in three movements, and is not in typical sonata form. The opening 'Allegro (molto moderato)' is typical of one of Stanford's organ fantasias, with a bold statement of the main theme of the movement as part of an extended free, and almost improvised, introduction, before a more rapid and involved central section. The burst of frenetic energy that follows gradually dissipates to give way to the stately theme of the opening and eventually a hushed ending on the dominant of the second movement. A characterful, almost cheeky, minuet ensues, in which the main themes from the opening movement can be heard at various points; the sharing of musical material between movements in this way being reminiscent of the cyclical manner of his various choral morning and evening services.

The third and final 'Allegro maestoso' movement is almost a continuation from

the first movement. A fantasia-like opening finally giving way to a decidedly cheerful fugal section in which all the tension accumulated in the introduction is steadily released – the main fugue subject is unsurprisingly derived from the main theme of the sonata. The fugue builds towards the recapitulation of the main theme above a dominant pedal as order is once again restored to proceedings with a steady but grandiose coda.

Completed in around 1923, the Four Intermezzi, Op. 189 were first published by Novello in the same year. **Marica Eroica** is the second of the four movements and is ostensibly a sonata form postlude. As the title suggests there is a good measure of pomp contained within a jovial demeanour – equally suitable for the liturgical or town hall organist.

As stated above, the Three Idylls, Op. 194, which were composed at some point between 1920 and 1923, represent some of the final works he wrote for the instrument, and the set possesses the last of Stanford's opus numbers. In **The Angelus**, along with 'By the seashore' and 'In the country', Stanford seems again to appeal to the town hall audience a little more, despite this particular movement being named after the prayer of devotion of the incarnation. It is fairly

dark and unsettled in nature, beginning in C minor with agitated pedal work punctuated by the manuals, while the tension is relieved through a more tranquil central section of the work, and the ultimate calm resolution at its close.

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Simon Niemiński

Simon Niemiński was born in London and is descended from an unlikely mixture of Edwardian Japanese acrobats, Lancastrian Music Hall artistes and a Polish army veteran. He studied in London at the Royal College of Music, at Cambridge University and as Organ Scholar of York Minster. He is Organist of St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral, and Director of Music at The Robin Chapel in Edinburgh, having previously been Organist and Master of the Music at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, where he directed the choir in daily choral services, concerts, recordings and broadcasts.

Over the airwaves he has featured in programmes including *The Organist Entertains* on BBC Radio 2, to *Choral Evensong* several times live on BBC Radio 3, and *Pipedreams* in the USA. As a recitalist, he has played at venues around the UK, Europe and the USA. His programmes often include unusual but attractive repertoire and it is his aim to play programmes which appeal to organ aficionados and sceptics alike.

His recordings have helped to revive the music of unjustly neglected composers, including releases of the *Promenades en Provence* by Eugène Reuchsel and the symphonies of Edward Shippen Barnes –

American pupil of Louis Vierne. Reviews have included: 'This is a splendid release [...] There is a lot of poetry here.' (*The American Record Guide*) and 'Simon Niemiński's playing is utterly convincing and at one stroke establishes him as a recording artist of the first rank.' (*Organists' Review*.)

An interest in transcriptions has resulted in recordings of works inspired by Shakespeare, and another of Elgar, including the complete *Enigma Variations* ('Romantic organ playing at its best': *The Organ*). A recording by Simon on the 2007 organ of St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral was reviewed as a *Star Recording* in *The Organ* magazine ('[...] a triumph for both organ and organist...').

Other recent releases are of the new organ at First Baptist Church, Abilene, Texas, and the first recording of the restored 1913 Brindley & Foster organ in Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh. In October 2012 he made his first recordings for Resonus Classics, of Giles Swayne's monumental *Stations of the Cross* for solo organ, and works by Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (including some first recordings.)

www.nieminski.com



**Brindley & Foster organ of Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh (1913)
(Restored Forth Pipe Organs, 2009)**

PEDAL ORGAN

Resultant Bass	32
Open Diapason	16
Bourdon	16
Echo Bourdon	16
Principal	8
Bass Flute	8
Trombone	16

CHOIR ORGAN

Viole d'Orchestre	8
Hohl Flute	8
Dulciana	8
Lieblich Flute	4
Harmonic Piccolo	2
Clarinet	8
Vox Humana	8
Trumpet	8
<i>Tremulant</i>	

GREAT ORGAN

Open Diapason Large	8
Open Diapason Small	8
Geigen Principal	8
Clarabella	8
Principal	4
Flute Harmonic	4
Fifteenth	2
Trumpet	8

SWELL ORGAN

Lieblich Bourdon	16
Violin Diapason	8
Lieblich Gedackt	8
Salicional	8
Voix Celeste	8
Gemshorn	4
Mixture	III
Cornopean	8
Hautboy	8
<i>Tremulant</i>	

COUPLERS

<i>Swell to Pedal</i>	
<i>Swell to Great</i>	
<i>Swell to Choir</i>	
<i>Swell octave to Great</i>	
<i>Swell sub octave to Great</i>	
<i>Swell octave</i>	
<i>Swell sub octave</i>	
<i>Choir to Great</i>	
<i>Choir to Pedal</i>	
<i>Choir octave</i>	
<i>Choir sub octave</i>	
<i>Great to Pedal</i>	



The Brindley and Foster Organ of Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh

In the autumn of 2009, Forth Pipe Organs completed a historic restoration of this magnificent and quite original Brindley Foster three manual and pedal pipe organ, together with the re-leathering of the soundboards, tubular pneumatic action and wind reservoirs.

Very few examples of Brindley's work survive without significant alteration having taken place, particularly to the action, which is tubular pneumatic with 'sliderless chests', having an individual action to each pipe. The company was notable for its innovations in organ building: in 1904 the 'Charles Brindley System' of design and construction led the way for new designs to aid the organist, such as the 'Bringradus Pedal', 'Transformers', 'Touches', 'Stop Transference', 'Governors' and 'Controllers'.

The instrument in Freemasons' Hall is a fine example of the 'Charles Brindley System' and incorporates a 'Brindgradus Pedal' (a general stop-crescendo pedal, allowing the organist to build to full organ without changing the combination drawn at the time), which has a rotary indicator (see image left, which displays from 'Off' then 'ppp' to 'fff') and incorporates two hitch-down pedals to

isolate the pedal's action to different manuals.

For further information on the instrument, visit www.forthpipeorgans.co.uk.

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Recorded in Freemasons' Hall, Edinburgh on 8-9 October 2012
Producer, Engineer and Editor: Adam Binks
Assistant Engineer: Steven Binks
Console Assistant: Jeremy Cull
Organ maintained by Jim Smail (Forth Pipe Organs)
Recorded at 24-bit / 96kHz resolution
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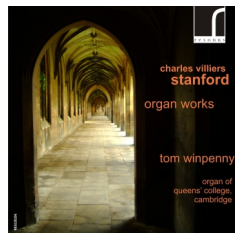
With thanks to the The Grand Lodge of Scotland.
Thanks are also due to Jane and Teddy.

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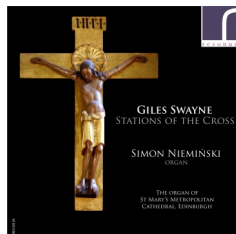
Other organ titles from Resonus Classics



Charles Villiers Stanford: Organ Works, Vol. 1
The J.J. Binns organ of Queens' College, Cambridge
Tom Winpenny
RES10104

'The combination of instrument, repertory and Tom Winpenny's immaculate playing is beyond reproach.'

International Record Review



Giles Swayne: Stations of the Cross
The Copley organ of St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral, Edinburgh
Simon Niemiński
RES10118

'Collectors of organ music will find much to appreciate here.'

Cross Rhythms



J.S. Bach: Clavier-Übung III
The Metzler organ of Trinity College, Cambridge
Stephen Farr
RES10120

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Gramophone

