

**KENNETH LEIGHTON**  
**COMPLETE ORGAN WORKS**



**STEPHEN FARR** ORGAN

**JOHN BUTT** ORGAN

**CHLOË HANSLIP** VIOLIN

**NICKY SPENCE** TENOR

# Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988)

## Complete Organ Works

### Stephen Farr *organ & harpsichord*

with

John Butt *organ* Disc 1, track 7

Chloë Hanslip *violin* Disc 3, tracks 4-8

Nicky Spence *tenor* Disc 2, track 5

The Rieger Organ of St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh Disc 1 & Disc 3, tracks 1-3 & 9-11

The Klais Organ of Symphony Hall, Birmingham Disc 2

The Henry Willis Organ of St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, London Disc 3, tracks 4-8

*'Indeed, it is the sheer musical quality of Farr's playing and his obvious sensitivity towards the rhythmic and textural detail of Leighton's music which makes this a hugely impressive release'*  
Gramophone (Editor's Choice)

*'[...] unimpeachable performances and sound'*  
Classical Ear

### DISC ONE

#### Six Fantasies on Hymn Tunes, Op. 72 (1975)

1. Helmsley [3:20]
2. Aus der Tiefe (Heinlien) [3:57]
3. Lumetto: Little canonic variations on 'Jesus bids us shine' [2:57]
4. St Columba (Erin) [2:56]
5. Veni Emmanuel [6:10]
6. Toccata on Hanover [3:08]

#### 7. Martyrs: Dialogues on a Scottish

Psalm-tune, Op. 73 (1976) [12:19]  
for organ duet

#### 8. Improvisation in Memoriam Maurice de Saumarez (1969) [6:41]

#### Missa de Gloria (Dublin Festival Mass),

- Op. 82 (1980)
9. Kyrie [4:35]
  10. Gloria [8:24]
  11. Credo [7:55]
  12. Sanctus [5:39]
  13. Agnus Dei [5:57]
  14. Ite, Missa Est [4:28]

Total playing time [78:31]

### DISC TWO

#### 1. Festival Fanfare (1968) [6:08]

#### Et Resurrexit (Theme, Fantasy & Fugue), Op. 49 (1966)

2. Theme: Sostenuto, lontano e religioso [2:39]
3. Fantasy: Largo alla marcia [5:22]
4. Fugue: Andante sostenuto [7:58]

#### 5. These are Thy Wonders (A Song of Renewal), Op. 84 (1981) \* [8:04]

for tenor and organ

#### 6. Veni Creator Spiritus (1987) [7:00]

#### Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia, Op. 41 (1963)

7. Prelude: Largo sostenuto [4:26]
8. Scherzo: Allegro molto, ritmico e chiaro [3:08]
9. Passacaglia: Adagio sostenuto [8:25]

Total playing time [53:16]

\* world premiere recording

DISC THREE	
1. <b>Paean</b> (1966)	[4:56]
2. <b>Elegy</b> (1965)	[8:07]
3. <b>Ode</b> (1977)	[3:48]
<b>Fantasy on a Chorale</b>	
<b>'Es ist genug', Op. 80 (1979)</b>	
for violin and organ	
4. Es ist genug	[6:27]
5. Herr, wenn ed dir gefällt	[3:48]
6. So spanne mich doch aus	[6:27]
7. Ich fahre sicher hin mit Frieden	[6:17]
8. Es ist genug	[3:04]
9. <b>Rockingham</b> (1975)	[3:09]
10. <b>Fanfare</b> (1966)	[2:15]
11. <b>Veni Redemptor</b> <b>(A Celebration), Op. 93 (1985)</b>	[10:21]
<b>Improvisations</b>	
<b>'De profundis', Op. 76 (1977) *</b>	
for harpsichord	
12. Molto adagio e con fantasia	[2:46]
13. Allegro e ritmico	[4:04]
14. Presto e leggiero	[1:00]
15. Appassionato	[5:24]
16. Più sostenuto e molto espressivo	[6:37]
17. Molto statico e misurato	[3:00]
Total playing time	[76:19]

### **Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988): Complete Organ Works**

Like all great gifts of God, music is a mysterious and paradoxical thing which can be used or misused, and which encompasses every part of our being, body, mind and soul.

Kenneth Leighton

As a treble chorister from 1938, many of Kenneth Leighton's formative musical experiences were accompanied by the 1905 Abbott and Smith organ of Wakefield Cathedral, in the West Yorkshire city where he was born and educated. As well as informing his writing for both organ and choir, Leighton repeatedly praised the importance of his time in the choir stalls throughout his life, stating 'My whole background is choral church music. I think one's early background is terribly important' and '[...] my career as a Cathedral chorister left some of the most vivid impressions in my mind of that time of life [...] what a marvellous musical training.' Given this musical upbringing that left such a mark, it was perhaps inevitable that Leighton would go on to write a great deal of choral music, mostly liturgical, as well as works for the organ.

Most of Leighton's solo organ works were written to commission, the first of which, the Op. 41 Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia,

was completed in 1963 following a commission from Bryan Hesford (1930-96), then organist of Wymondham Abbey in Norfolk. Initially, the organ was not an instrument for which Leighton felt particularly compelled to write, or even with which he felt particularly comfortable, turning to it only in his mid-thirties. He was most concerned overall with the instrument's architectural possibilities, at various times lamenting how the lack of clarity in the organ bothered him. As late as 1979 in a published interview, Leighton stated how he '[...] found the organ frustrating, there's very little good music to play on it anyway apart from Bach'. While it seemed to present a significant challenge for him to overcome, however, his solo organ music constitutes a significant part of his output as a whole. Indeed in the same 1979 article he also goes on to say how '[...] I've found writing for the organ very exciting recently and I've kept on at it'.

The earliest of the four works contained on the first disc, **Improvisation in Memoriam Maurice de Saumarez** was composed during November and early December of 1969 – six years after the Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia, and during his second, and final, academic year as a Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford. It was some years earlier, while a Gregory Fellow in music at the University of Leeds in the mid-1950s



that Leighton had first met the artist Lionel Maurice de Sausmarez (1915-1969), who held the post of Head of Fine Art at the same university from 1951-1959. In 1964, de Sausmarez commissioned Leighton to write his *Seven Variations for String Quartet*, Op. 43, in memory of the artist's mother, Jessie Rose de Sausmarez.

Writing about the *Improvisation*, Leighton states that it '[...] was composed towards the end of the 1969 for the memorial service [...] for the artist, teacher and dear friend, Maurice de Sausmarez, who died an early death in the same year.' The organist at the first performance, which took place on 15 December 1969 was Nicholas Cleobury, himself a former student under Leighton at Worcester College. From the outset the *Improvisation* is a work of great anguish, and is dark and deeply foreboding. Leighton further describes the work as expressing '[...] a mood of mourning and protest symbolised in the conflict between lyrical counterpoint, and an ostinato (subject to variation) consisting of three chord clusters which persist throughout the piece. The clusters reach a climax of intensity in a chord containing all the notes of the chromatic scale'.

The **Six Fantasies on Hymn Tunes**, Op. 72, were written during August 1975 and

dedicated to Herrick Bunney (1915-1997), a close friend and the organist of St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh for an incredible fifty years from 1946 to 1996. Written some five years following Leighton's appointment as the Reid Professor of Edinburgh University's Faculty of Music, the *Six Fantasies* are representative of the considerable mellowing of his musical style that occurred during this decade, as well as demonstrating Leighton's interest in all forms of hymnody. Indeed, Leighton was one of the music consultants – as well as contributing five new hymn tunes – for the third edition of *The Church of Scotland's The Church Hymnary*, first published in 1973.

This magnificently constructed and contrasted collection of hymn Fantasies begins with a strident Fantasy on the Advent hymn tune 'Helmsley' ('Lo! he comes with clouds descending'), marked by the composer as 'Exultant and fast'. The second Fantasy is based on the Lutheran chorale 'Aus der Tiefe', from the *Nürnbergisches Gesangbuch* of 1676, and mostly associated with the Lenten hymn 'Forty days and forty nights' in the Anglican tradition, and is much more chromatic and searching. The characterful Fantasy on 'Lumetto' follows, which is subtitled 'Little canonic variations on 'Jesus bids us shine'', which consists of four clear short variations of differing textures.



Associated with the text 'The King of love my Shepherd is', the fourth Fantasy is based on the Irish hymn tune 'St Columba'. A decorated version of the tune is heard in canon, beginning calmly before growing in intensity before an elated climax. Based on the hymn 'Veni Emmanuel' ('O come, O come, Emmanuel') the fifth and most substantial Fantasy uses the melody of the Advent hymn adapted from a French Missal by Thomas Helmore (1811-1890), beginning darkly and chromatically before going through a series of variations, growing once again to a climax, before a sudden soft and serene ending. The final Fantasy is the vigorous 'Toccatto on Hanover' ('O worship the King all-glorious above') that is reminiscent of the jubilation of the opening Fantasy on 'Helmsley'.

Commissioned by The Organ Club for its fiftieth anniversary in 1976, the organ duet **Martyrs: Dialogues on a Scottish Psalm-tune**, Op. 73, was first performed in Westminster Abbey on 15 July the same year by its dedicatees, brothers Nicholas and Stephen Cleobury. Furthering the influence of hymn tunes found in the Six Fantasies, *Martyrs* is based on the metrical psalm-tune of the same name that was first published in the Scottish Psalter of 1615. Leighton was a frequent visitor to the Scottish Isle of Arran, which was also destined to become his final resting place. It was also a place where he

liked to compose and during the winter of 1975-76 he decamped to the island to write the first act of his only full-scale opera, *Columba*, Op. 77, based on the life of the Irish saint and early Christian missionary. The significant organ duet *Martyrs* was also composed during this period in January and February of 1976.

The influences on *Martyrs* are inevitably linked to his other activities through this time, in particular his work on *Columba*. In many ways the bleakness of the winter on Arran is echoed throughout the duet alongside his interest in hymnody and, in this case, Scottish metrical psalm-tunes. Leighton states how 'The power of a great hymn tune is immortal – it spans the centuries and crams into a few notes the spiritual experience of a whole civilization, this is perhaps why I seem to be using them more and more as a focus and inspiration to my own ideas.' Leighton's fascination in this area also extended to the haunting and seemingly bizarre Gaelic methods of congregational psalm singing, which is found in churches in the Scottish islands in particular. The original psalm-tune, *Martyrs*, is in itself an austere but robust psalm-tune, and is heard in full at the beginning of the work. Densely chromatic and inventive variations follow, the dialogue taking place between the two organ parts beginning with slow

and soft counterpoint closely based on material from the psalm-tune. The work is characterised by constantly accumulating tension in the two extended parts of the work all leading up to the epic and fully harmonised final declaration of the psalm-tune, which is interspersed with triumphant fanfares.

At some thirty-five minutes in length, **Missa de Gloria**, Op. 82, is Leighton's magnum opus for the instrument. Begun in October 1979 and completed on 22 March 1980, it was written for the first Dublin International Organ Festival; the world premiere was given in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, by the organist Gerard Gillen on 29 June 1980. John Birch gave the UK premiere of the work in July the following year at St Michael's Church, Cornhill in London.

Subtitled the 'Dublin Festival Mass', the *Missa de Gloria* was described by Leighton to be the first of his works '[...] to be almost entirely inspired by plainsong'. While the 'Kyrie' is free and doesn't employ this influence, each of the remaining movements of the organ mass features and is based on elements from the twelfth-century Sarum chant for use on Easter Day. While Leighton clearly marks where the representation of each section of text comes throughout the score, the chant is not always

overtly obvious in most cases, and is quite seamlessly integrated into Leighton's musical style.

The opening 'Kyrie' contains a brooding atmosphere, described by Leighton as 'Intense and mainly contrapuntal movement based on oscillating major and minor thirds'. The 'Gloria' is contrasting, beginning optimistically with '[...] introductory fanfare-like sections', after which '[...] the music closely follows the plainsong in the manner of a toccata.' A softer section, representing the text 'Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata', follows in which the plainsong is more decorated, before returning to the toccata of the opening, which is now '[...] more developed [...] and culminates in a fugal coda on the word Amen.'

Leighton describes the 'Credo' as '[...] mostly calm and meditative', and asks in the score for 'frequent changes of colour' in the registration. The chant is most obviously stated throughout the 'Credo', surrounded by varying and often rich harmonic textures, which are often improvisatory in nature, and suggestive of the twentieth-century French organ music that interested him – Messiaen in particular. Leighton continues: 'The chant speaks for itself, but the treatment becomes gradually more decorated towards the end.'

The 'Sanctus' opens with a brilliant fanfare, '[...] a slow swing in great chordal and polytonal texture' while the central '[...] Pleni sunt caeli is soft and dance-like'. The soft 'Hosanna' leads into the 'Benedictus', a bitonal duet, '[...] slow and mystical' while 'a brief reference to the dance says Hosanna.' The chromatic and contrapuntal fantasia section that begins each 'Agnus Dei' is punctuated with a more chordal 'miserere' while 'The final Agnus Dei and Dona nobis pacem are soloistic and triadic in conception.' The closing dismissal 'Ite Missa Est' is highly virtuosic: 'A brilliant toccata ending with a massive acclamation.'

The first of Kenneth Leighton's oeuvre of organ works is also one of his most enduring compositions for the instrument – the **Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia**, Op. 41. For a first foray into composition for solo organ it is ambitious and conceived on a relatively large scale at approximately twenty minutes over three movements. It was commissioned by the organist Bryan Hesford, who was newly-appointed as organist of Brecon Cathedral in Wales at the time of the work's completion in January 1963. Hesford himself premiered the work on 24 October that same year at the organ of Norwich Cathedral in a recital that also contained works by François Couperin, François d'Agincour, Felix Mendelssohn and Jean Langlais.

The Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia was itself begun during 1962, a year in which choral works were dominant in Leighton's output. The anthem *Give me the wings of faith*, an arrangement of a traditional French carol *O leave your sheep* and the *Missa Sancti Thomae*, Op. 40, were all penned in 1962, the latter composed for Canterbury Cathedral to celebrate the 800th anniversary of St Thomas Beckett's consecration as Archbishop of Canterbury. The only other composition completed in that year was the fairly short Festive Overture for small orchestra, written with young players in mind. Leighton completed no other works during 1963, the remainder of which was taken up with work on his brooding and dramatic Symphony No. 1, Op. 42, of which the Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia is a vivid precursor.

When Leighton began the Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia, his experience of writing for the organ was entirely limited to accompaniment writing for choral works, and Herrick Bunney (then organist of St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh and Edinburgh University Organist) later recalled how Leighton '[...] came to me and said, "I want to write something for the organ, but I don't know anything about the organ. Can you help me?" So then we sat down together at a console at the concert hall organ at the University, at the McEwan Hall, one of those big, Romantic machines, and I showed

him roughly how an organ worked, what made it tick, and gave him scores of music by [Marcel] Dupré, for example, for him to take away and look at and see how those fellows wrote for the instrument. [...] lo and behold, fairly soon after that he produced the Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia [...] which showed instant mastery of the idiom.'

Indeed, Leighton's ability to write idiomatic music effectively for the instrument was evident from this early organ work, which demonstrates his particular gift to sustain tension and interest for extended periods while inviting the individual organist to supply his own thoughts on registration. The work is brimming with compositional ideas, although the main melodic material of the work is slight, based mostly around the ambiguity between major and minor heard in the first bars of the 'Prelude'. This ambiguity, punctuated by the alternating major and minor of the *pesante* pedal part, leads directly on to a growth of tension that is both organic and deeply chromatic while loaded with counterpoint.

The 'Scherzo' is typical of a reasonable number of scherzos that Leighton wrote, some of the most notable being the 'Toccata' from the Concerto for Organ, Strings and Timpani, Op. 58 (1970), and the two scherzos contained in the Symphony No. 2 'Sinfonia Mistica', Op. 69

completed in 1974. Most of Leighton's scherzos are similar in nature, style and approach, often providing a conflict between a playful and anxious mood.

While not being strictly twelve-tone in its construction the main 'Passacaglia' theme is a twelve-tone row. Leighton was interested in the concept of twelve-tone techniques as used by composers such as Alban Berg, Béla Bartók and Luigi Dallapiccola, and was prone to using elements of these methods within tonal boundaries, which is here underlined by the resounding C major that ends the work. (The Nine Variations, Op. 36, for solo piano provide a rare example of Leighton composing stricter twelve-tone music). The 'Passacaglia' is often both dense and dark, the tension provided initially by an intensely austere recurring passacaglia theme in the pedals. As the movement continues, the theme becomes developed and distorted in increasingly more rapid, energetic and virtuosic variations. A short improvisatory section ensues before six relentless statements of the passacaglia theme, now returned to the pedal, precede a declamatory C major resolution.

All of Leighton's works for solo organ were written to commission, and the completion and publication by Novello of Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia led on to a number of commissions for solo organ works soon

afterwards with five further works completed before his departure from Edinburgh and his brief appointment as Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford. The two most substantial of these works are the Festival Fanfare and **Et Resurrexit (Theme, Fantasy & Fugue)**, Op. 49.

Begun during late 1965 and completed in August of 1966, *Et Resurrexit* is dedicated to Robert Munns, who gave the first performance of this work on 16 November the same year in Brompton Parish Church. (Munns also premiered Leighton's organ concerto in April 1971 in the chapel of King's College, Cambridge). Not dissimilar in scale to the Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia, *Et Resurrexit* is also spread across three movements – Leighton notes how: 'Although purely abstract in design, the work attempts to give musical expression of the individual's struggle for belief in the middle of the resurrection.'

Once again Leighton displays immense musical economy, the material of the whole work being derived from the opening four-note theme. Leighton writes how 'The opening phrase of four notes is a kind of symbol, and in musical terms the struggle is between chromatic and diatonic versions of this simple idea.' The manuscript of the second sketch of *Et Resurrexit* contains an earlier title for the work as 'Theme, Fantasia

& Variations' and Leighton further remarks how 'Although in three distinct movements the form of the piece could also be described as continuous variation, since the opening phrase undergoes constant transformation in the course of each movement.'

The **Festival Fanfare** was composed during August of 1968 and written for the inaugural West Riding Cathedrals Festival, which combined the three Yorkshire cathedral choirs of Sheffield, Bradford & Wakefield and took place on the 1 and 2 November that same year, hosted by Sheffield Cathedral. Graham Matthews, the then recently appointed organist of Sheffield Cathedral, writes how: 'Knowing that Kenneth Leighton was associated with Wakefield Cathedral, I wrote to him personally about the forthcoming festival, suggesting the title 'Festival Fanfare' and requesting a five-minute solo organ piece. This commission was promptly fulfilled to the letter.' Matthews gave the Festival Fanfare its first two performances during the festival, as a voluntary for a festal evensong and as the opening work of a grand concert of the combined choirs with a Festival Orchestra.

The final two works on the second disc both date from the 1980s – *These are Thy Wonders (A Song of Renewal)*, Op. 84 for tenor and organ (1981) and Leighton's last composition for solo organ, *Veni Creator Spiritus* (1987).

Composed between April and May of 1981, **These Are Thy Wonders** was commissioned by the tenor Neil Mackie in honour of the seventieth birthday of Peter Pears. Mackie, accompanied by the organist Richard Hughes, premiered the work on 23 June 1981 in St Magnus' Cathedral, Kirkwall, Orkney. In setting words to music Leighton was drawn to the work of the metaphysical poets, often to great effect. *These Are Thy Wonders* provides no exception in a luminous setting of George Herbert's poem 'The Flower' from *The Temple* (1633). The imagery is strong here in this vivid through-composed work – the garden of life in which some flowers perish and die while others soar towards heaven. The challenge of balancing a solo voice with the wide range of the organ is fluently negotiated while the intensely lyrical nature of Leighton's music is here in abundance.

Composed just a year before Leighton's untimely death at the age of fifty-eight, **Veni Creator Spiritus** was written for the Dunfermline Abbey Festival and first performed in Dunfermline Abbey by the organist Andrew Armstrong on 21 June 1987. Leighton frequently described the importance of both plainchant and hymn tunes in his music ('My work is littered with hymn tunes'), and this short work, described as a 'Prelude' by Leighton, is an exquisite

meditation on the plainchant hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*. Between lilting sections based around the ninth-century *Veni Creator Spiritus* theme, the chant itself is brought out *in rilievo*, suggesting the structure of a Baroque chorale prelude with one complete verse fractured into its four separate phrases.

Perhaps the most performed of Leighton's organ works today is **Paean**. Commissioned by Oxford University Press for the second volume of *Modern Organ Music*, *Paean* was completed in July 1966 and first performed by Simon Preston on 25 January 1967 at a recital to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of The Organ Club in London's Royal Festival Hall. Bold in nature, it encapsulates many typical Leighton elements including chromatic writing, lyrical lines and syncopated rhythmic energy in this celebratory work.

In succession to the 1963 Prelude, Scherzo and Passacaglia, Bryan Hesford commissioned **Elegy** for inclusion in the Novello volume *Music Before Service*. It was Leighton's second solo work for the instrument and was completed in April 1965 – the first known performance was some years later in the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, with Hesford himself at the organ.

Despite the reserved expectations of a work

written to be used before a service, Leighton provides a composition of some scale and substance that invites the player to make full use of the instrument's range. Composed in an arch-shaped form, much of the musical material is derived from a chromatic four note theme heard at the very beginning of the work. A dark and unsettled piece, it is also characterised by long and deeply lyrical threads of counterpoint, which reach a dramatic climax before a gradual return to the softness of the opening.

Originally entitled 'Heroic Ode' in manuscript sketches, **Ode** was written for Oxford University Press's *A Second Album of Preludes and Interludes* and is among six works by British composers penned for this organ volume. Composed in November 1977, it represents the first of a number of shorter organ works commissioned for various compilations published by Novello and Oxford University Press. Leighton slowly builds tension and the dynamic through this short work with dense textures, punctuated with a pesante pedal line, leading to a triumphant C major conclusion.

**Fantasy on a Chorale (Es ist genug)**, Op. 80, is Leighton's only foray into the rarely heard combination of violin and organ, and is one of his most substantial works in a single movement. It was commissioned by the

American violinist Jean Harmon, and was first performed on 4 May 1980 in Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church, Washington DC, by Jean Harmon and organist Kenneth Lowenberg. Written in May of the previous year, Leighton dedicated the work to the memory of his father. The Fantasy makes extensive use of the chorale by J.G. Ahle previously used (Leighton notes) by J.S. Bach in his cantata *O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort*, BWV 60, and by Alban Berg in his last completed work, the Violin Concerto of 1935. Leighton goes on to describe how 'The tritone plays an important part, both melodically and harmonically, in the development of the Fantasy, which is in one movement but divided into five sections based on the five different phrases of the chorale. The music tries to illuminate the words of the chorale.'

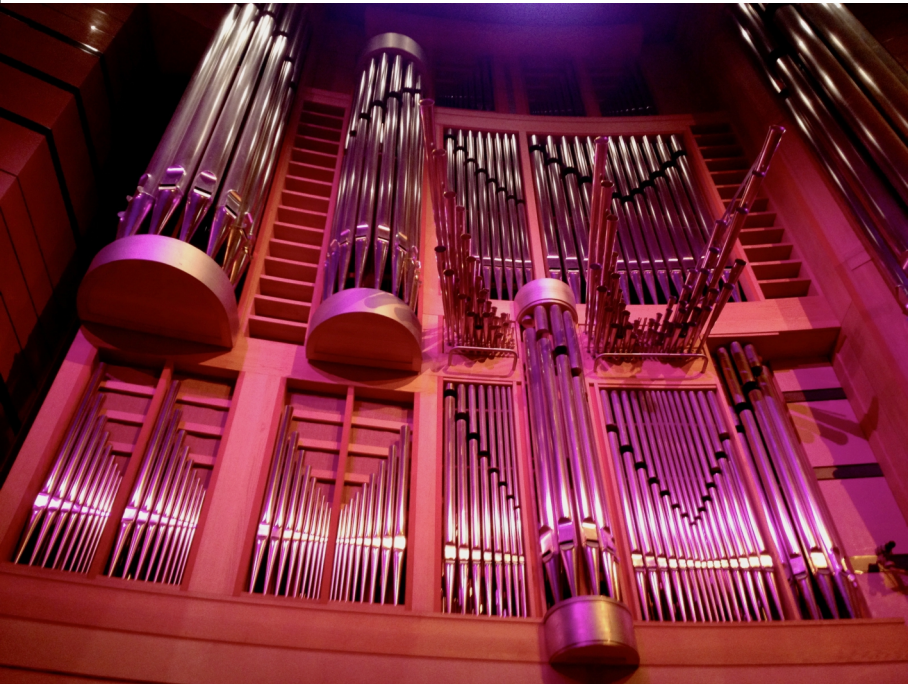
**Fanfare** and **Rockingham** provide two of the most approachable of Leighton's organ works composed in 1966 and 1975 respectively, both composed for Oxford University Press publications – *Volume 1 of Easy Modern Organ Music (Fanfare)*, and *Chorale Preludes on English Tunes (Rockingham)*. The two works are completely contrasting in mood, the first a solemn yet straightforward fanfare, while the second provides a gently lilting chorale prelude on the familiar hymn tune to 'When I survey the wondrous cross'.

Based on chant from the Sarum Antiphoner, **Veni Redemptor**, Op. 93, was composed in July of 1985. Subtitled 'A Celebration' it was written for the North Wales International Music Festival that same year. It is dedicated to the organist John Scott (1956-2015) – himself born in Wakefield and a former chorister of Wakefield Cathedral – who gave the first performance of the work in St Asaph Cathedral on 20 September 1985. Leighton describes how: '[...] the music takes its starting point from the great plainsong melody Mode I which is usually sung to St Ambrose's hymn 'Veni Redemptor Gentium' ('Come, thou redeemer of the earth'), a celebration of Christmas which gives expression to awe and majesty as well as to joy and brightness.'

Completing this set is Leighton's sole work for solo harpsichord – **Improvisations (De Profundis)**, Op. 76, begun in 1976 and completed in August of 1977. As well as being a pianist of considerable ability, Leighton had some affinity with the harpsichord, both as a soloist and continuo player, which was further enhanced with the presence in Edinburgh of the Raymond Russell Collection of Early Keyboard Instruments, bequeathed to the university in 1964 during Leighton's time as a senior lecturer. Giles Easterbrook, who worked with Leighton's publisher Novello

for many years and prepared an edition of *Improvisations* for publication by Maecenas in 1996, states how '*Improvisations* was written at a time of some unhappiness, stress and upheaval for the composer' the influence of which is clearly evident from the opening bars of this monumental work. Composed in one movement (and without commission), Leighton described the work as '[...] a set of constant variations [...] It tries to use for the most part the lyrical and contrapuntal potentialities of the harpsichord and is meant to be played on an instrument of eighteenth century design.' The instrument used in this recording is a copy of the two-manual Pascal Taskin harpsichord of 1769 housed in the Raymond Russell Collection in St Cecilia's Hall in Edinburgh, where Leighton himself gave the premiere of *Improvisations* on 7 June 1978.

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The Klais Organ of Symphony Hall, Birmingham (2001)  
Photography: Bob Hall (Creative Commons - flickr.com)

## DISC TWO

### 5. *These are Thy Wonders* (*A Song of Renewal*), Op. 84

How fresh, oh Lord, how sweet and clean  
Are thy returns! even as the flowers in spring;  
To which, besides their own demean,  
The late-past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.  
Grief melts away  
Like snow in May,  
As if there were no such cold thing.

Who would have thought my shriveled heart  
Could have recovered greenness? It was gone  
Quite underground; as flowers depart  
To see their mother-root, when they have blown,  
Where they together  
All the hard weather,  
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

These are thy wonders, Lord of power,  
Killing and quickening, bringing down to hell  
And up to heaven in an hour;  
Making a chiming of a passing-bell.

We say amiss  
This or that is:  
Thy word is all, if we could spell.

Oh that I once past changing were,  
Fast in thy Paradise, where no flower can wither!  
Many a spring I shoot up fair,  
Offering at heaven, growing and groaning thither;  
Nor doth my flower  
Want a spring shower,  
My sins and I joining together.

[But while I grow in a straight line,  
Still upwards bent, as if heaven were mine own,  
Thy anger comes, and I decline:  
What frost to that? what pole is not the zone  
Where all things burn,  
When thou dost turn,  
And the least frown of thine is shown?]

And now in age I bud again,  
After so many deaths I live and write;  
I once more smell the dew and rain,  
And relish versing. Oh, my only light,  
It cannot be  
That I am he  
On whom thy tempests fell all night.

[These are thy wonders, Lord of love,  
To make us see we are but flowers that glide;  
Which when we once can find and prove,  
Thou hast a garden for us where to bide;  
Who would be more,  
Swelling through store,  
Forfeit their Paradise by their pride.]

*The Flower* by George Herbert (1593-1633)  
(stanzas 5 & 7 not set)

**Specification of the 1992 Rieger Organ  
St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh**

**Great (Manual II)**

1. Bourdon	16
2. Principal	8
3. Stopped Diapason	8
4. Harmonic Flute	8
5. Octave	4
6. Nachthorn	4
7. Quint	2 2/3
8. Superoctave	2
9. Mixture VI	2
10. Mixture IV	1 1/3
11. Cornet V	8
12. Trumpet	16
13. Trumpet	8
14. Trumpet	4
Tremulant	

**Swell (Manual III - enclosed)**

26. Bourdon	16
27. Diapason	8
28. Souffle	8
29. Flûte à cheminée	8
30. Gambe	8
31. Voix Céleste	8
32. Prestant	4
33. Flûte pointue	4
34. Nazard	2 2/3
35. Quarte de Nazard	2
36. Tierce	1 3/5
37. Sifflet	1

38. Plein Jeu VI-VIII	2 2/3
39. Basson	16
40. Trompette	8
41. Hautbois	8
42. Voix humaine	8
43. Clairon	4
Glocken	
Tremulant	

**Positive (Manual I)**

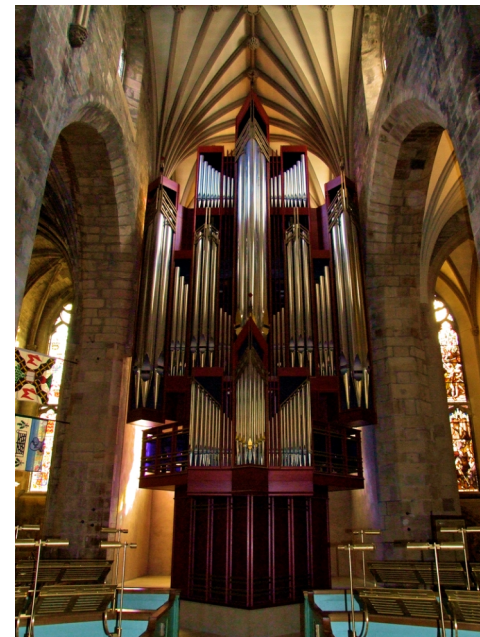
15. Gedackt	8
16. Salicional	8
17. Principal	4
18. Chimney Flute	4
19. Octave	2
20. Recorder	2
21. Sesquialtera II	2 2/3
22. Larigot1	1 1/3
23. Mixture IV	1
24. Rankett	16
25. Cromorne	8
Tremulant	

**Pedal**

44. Untersatz	32
45. Principal	16
46. Open Wood	16
47. Sub Bass	16
48. Octave	8
49. Gedackt	8

50. Choral Bass	4
51. Flute	4
52. Mixture V	2 2/3
53. Bombarde	32
54. Bombarde	16
55. Fagotto	16
56. Posaune	8
57. Clarion	4
Glocken	

Compass: manuals C-a3 (58 notes)  
pedals C-f1 (30 notes)  
Couplers: III/I, I/II, III/II, I/P, II/P, III/P  
Combinations:  
12 generals  
6 individuals per division on  
16 memory levels  
Sequencers  
General Crescendo  
Tutti  
  
General cancel



**Specification of the 2001 Klais Organ of  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham**

**Positiv (Manual I)**

1. Quintadena	16
2. Praestant	8
3. Voce humana	8
4. Gedackt	8
5. Principal	4
6. Koppelflöte	4
7. Nasat	2 2/3
8. Octave	2
9. Terzflöte	1 3/5
10. Sifflöte	1 1/3
11. Scharff	V 1 1/3
12. Dulzian	16
13. Trompette	8
14. Cromorne	8
Tremulant	
Swell to Positiv	
Solo to Positiv	
Chamade to Positiv	

**Great (Manual II)**

15. Praestant	16
16. Principal	8
17. Flaut major	8
18. Gambe	8
19. Bordun	8
20. Quinte	5 1/3
21. Octave	4
22. Nachthorn	4
23. Terz	3 1/5

24. Quinte	2 2/3
25. Superoctave	2
26. Mixtur	V 2
27. Cymbel	III 1/2
28. Cornet	V
29. Trompete	16
30. Trompete	8
31. Clairon	4
Positiv to Great	
Swell to Great	
Solo to Great	
Chamade to Great	

**Swell (Manual III - enclosed)**

32. Bourdon	16
33. Flûte harmonique	8
34. Gamba	8
35. Voix céleste	8
36. Rohrflöte	8
37. Principal	4
38. Flûte octaviane	4
39. Nasard	2 2/3
40. Octavin	2
41. Tierce	1 3/5
42. Sifflet	1
43. Plein jeu	2
44. Basson	16
45. Trompette harmonique	8
46. Hautbois	8
47. Voix humaine	8
48. Clairon harmonique	4
Tremulant	
Solo to Swell	

Chamade to Swell  
Chamade to Solo

**Solo (Manual IV - enclosed)**

49. Salicional	8
50. Cor de nuit	8
51. Traversflöte	8
52. Céleste	8
53. Viola	4
54. Rohrflöte	4
55. Waldflöte	2
56. Baryton	16
57. Clarinette	8
Tremulant	
58. Trompette en chamade	8
59. Trompette en chamade	4
Sub-octave Chamade to Chamade	
Chamade on Solo	
Chamade on Great	
Chamade on Positiv	

Right-hand Echo Division (enclosed;  
inside reverberation chamber)

60. Unda maris I-II	8
61. Trombone	16
62. Trumpet	8
63. French Horn	8

Left-hand Echo Division (enclosed;  
inside reverberation chamber)

64. Tuba	8
65. Cor anglais	8
66. Tuba clarion	4

Right Echo on Positiv  
Left Echo on Great

**Pedal**

67. Openflute	32
68. Untersatz	32
69. Principal	16
70. Violon	16
71. Subbass	16
72. Octave	8
73. Cello	8
74. Gedackt	8
75. Superoctave	4
76. Hohlflöte	4
77. Mixtur	IV 2 2/3
78. Contrabombarde	32
79. Bombarde	16
80. Fagott	16
81. Trompete	8
82. Clairon	4

Positiv to Pedal

Great to Pedal

Swell to Pedal

Solo to Pedal

Chamade to Pedal

Great & Pedal Combinations Coupled

Manual compass: C-c4

Pedal compass: C-g1

798 combinations & sequencer

General Crescendo roller pedal



**Specification of the Henry Willis Organ of  
St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, London**

**Pedal**

1. Resultant Bass	32
2. Open Wood	16
3. Violone	16
4. Bourdon	16
5. Dulciana	16
6. Octave Wood	8
7. Flute Bass	8
8. Ophicleide	16

**Choir (Manual II - enclosed)**

9. Contra Dulciana	16
10. Violoncello	8
11. Claribel Flute	8
12. Dulciana	8
13. Concert Flute	4
14. Viola	4
15. Nasard Harmonique	2 2/3
16. Piccolo	2
17. Corno di Bassetto	8

**Great (Manual I)**

18. Double Open Diapason	16
19. Open Diapason I	8
20. Open Diapason II	8
21. Stopped Diapason	8
22. Claribel Flute	8
23. Principal	4
24. Flute Harmonique	4
25. Twelfth	2 2/3

26. Fifteenth	2
27. Sesquialtera	IV
28. Trombone	16
29. Tromba	8
30. Clarion	4

**Swell (Manual III - enclosed)**

31. Lieblich Bourdon	16
32. Open Diapason	8
33. Lieblich Gedact	8
34. Salcional	8
35. Vox Angelica	8
36. Gemshorn	4
37. Lieblich Flute	4
38. Flageolet	2
39. Mixture	IV
40. Contra Hautboy	16
41. Cornopean	8
42. Hautboy	8
43. Clarion	4
44. Tremulant	

**Solo (Manual IV - enclosed)**

45. Flute Bouchee Harmonique	8
46. Gamba	8
47. Flute Harmonique	4
48. Clarinet	8
49. Vox Humana	8
50. Tremulant	
51. Tuba	8

**Couplers**

Swell to Pedal
Swell to Great
Swell to Choir
Swell octave
Swell suboctave
Swell unison off
Choir to Great
Choir to Pedal
Choir octave
Choir suboctave
Choir unison off
Great to Pedal
Solo to Pedal
Solo to Great
Solo to Swell
Solo to Choir
Solo Octave
Solo Sub Octave
Solo Unison Off

**Accessories**

10-channel piston system with generous provision of thumb pistons

Manual compass: C-a3

Pedal compass: C-f1



John Butt

*I still feel I'm a Yorkshireman – very much so – because I have all the natural qualities of one. I think this of my music too, because of a certain directness and a common-sense attitude. I'm also very much a romantic basically; there's a very emotional attitude behind it all, which I think is characteristically Yorkshire actually.*

Kenneth Leighton, 1979

## Stephen Farr

Stephen Farr pursues a varied career as a soloist and continuo player, activities which he combines with the post of Director of Music at St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge. 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. In 2014 he completed a PhD on the organ and harpsichord works of Judith Bingham.

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. In the 2015 BBC Proms he performed Jón Leifs rarely heard organ concerto with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Sakari Oramo. 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.

[www.stephenfarr.co.uk](http://www.stephenfarr.co.uk)



## Nicky Spence

Hailed by *The Daily Telegraph* as ‘a voice of real distinction,’ Nicky Spence is fast emerging as ‘one of our brightest young tenors.’ An artist of great integrity, Nicky Spence’s unique skills as a singing actor and the rare honesty in his musicianship are steadfastly earning him a place at the top of the profession. Having trained at the Guildhall School and the National Opera Studio, he took his place as an inaugural Harewood Artist at the ENO in 2011.

Nicky has enjoyed great operatic success in the UK which has led to important International debuts in houses such as Opera de Paris, La Monnaie, Opera Frankfurt, De Nederlandse Opera and The Metropolitan Opera, New York. He works regularly with conductors such as Edward Gardner, Sir Mark Elder, Phillipe Jordan, Carlo Rizzi, Andris Nelsons, Maurizio Benini, Donald Runnicles and Mark Wigglesworth in roles which include David (*Die Meistersingers von Nürnberg*), Števa (*Jenůfa*), Alwa (*Lulu*), Andres (*Wozzeck*), Janek (*The Makropoulos Case*), Steuermann (*Der Fliegender Holländer*), Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Iago (*Otello* – Rossini), Baron Lummer (*Intermezzo*), Chevalier de la Force (*Les Carmélites*), Tom Rakewell (*The Rake’s Progress*) and Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*). He has created and premiered many new

pieces and most notably, works by Jonathan Dove and the lead role in Nico Muhly’s opera *Two Boys* for ENO and The Metropolitan Opera.

On the recital platform, Nicky enjoys collaboration with leading artists of art song such as Malcolm Martineau, Julius Drake, Roger Vignoles, Iain Burnside, William Vann, Simon Lepper and Joseph Middleton. His discography includes a recital disc of French Melodié, Shakespeare Settings (both with Martineau) and works by Leoncavallo, Schumann, Britten and premieres of Jonathan Dove, Pavel Haas, Alun Hoddinott and Mark-Anthony Turnage.

In 2015, Nicky was nominated for Young Singer of the Year by the International Opera Awards and The Times Breakthrough Artist Award at the South Bank Sky Arts Awards.

[www.nickyspence.com](http://www.nickyspence.com)



Photography: Raphaëlle Photography

## Chloë Hanslip

Chloë Hanslip (b. 1987) has already established herself as an artist of distinction on the international stage. Prodigiously talented, she made her BBC Proms debut in 2002 and her US concerto debut in 2003, and has performed at major venues in the UK (Royal Festival Hall, Wigmore Hall), Europe (Vienna Musikverein, Hamburg Laeiszhalle, Paris Louvre and Salle Gaveau, St Petersburg Hermitage) as well as Carnegie Hall, Metropolitan Arts Space in Tokyo and the Seoul Arts Centre.

Her performances have included, among others, the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Bremen Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Lahti Symphony, Moscow State Symphony, Vienna Tonkünstler Orchester, Czech National Symphony and the Royal Flemish Philharmonic. Further afield her engagements include the Detroit Symphony, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony, Adelaide Symphony, Auckland Philharmonia and the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. She has collaborated with conductors such as Sir Neville Marriner, Sir Andrew Davis, Mariss Jansons, Paavo Järvi, Charles Dutoit, Michail Jurowski and Jeffrey Tate.

Chloë has an extensive discography, including Violin Concertos by Vieuxtemps (Royal Flemish Philharmonic Orchestra/Brabbin), York Bowen Sonatas (Danny Driver), Glazunov/Schoeck Concertos and Medtner Violin Sonatas. Other notable recordings include Bruch Concertos with the London Symphony Orchestra (Warner Classics) for which she won the Echo Klassik Award for 'Best Newcomer' (2002) and 'Young British Classical Performer' at the Classical BRITS (2003), and a highly acclaimed recording of John Adams Violin Concerto with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra/Slatkin.

Hanslip's wide-ranging repertoire spans Concertos by Britten, Beethoven, Brahms, Korngold, Shostakovich, Barber, Bernstein, Delius, Mendelssohn, Elgar and Sibelius. With a particular passion for contemporary repertoire, in recent years she has performed works by Adams, Glass, Corigliano, Nyman, Huw Watkins, Peter Maxwell Davies and Brett Dean.

Chloë studied for ten years with the Russian pedagogue Zakhar Bron. She has also worked with Christian Tetzlaff, Robert Masters, Ida Haendel, Salvatore Accardo, and Gerhard Schulz.

She plays a Guarneri del Gesù made in 1737.

[www.chloehanslip.com](http://www.chloehanslip.com)





## John Butt

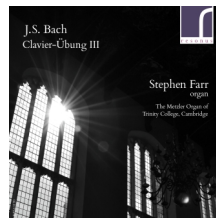
John Butt is Gardiner Professor of Music at the University of Glasgow and musical director of Edinburgh's Dunedin Consort. As an undergraduate at Cambridge University, he held the office of organ scholar at King's College. Continuing as a graduate student working on the music of Bach he received his PhD in 1987. He was subsequently a lecturer at the University of Aberdeen and a Fellow of Magdalene College Cambridge, joining the faculty at UC Berkeley in 1989 as University Organist and Professor of Music. In autumn 1997 he returned to Cambridge as a University Lecturer and Fellow of King's College, and in October 2001 he took up his current post at Glasgow.

His books have been published by Cambridge University Press: these include *Bach Interpretation* (1990), a handbook on Bach's Mass in B Minor (1991), *Music Education and the Art of Performance in the German Baroque* (1994). *Playing with History* (2002) marked a new tack, examining the broad culture of historically informed performance and attempting to explain and justify it as a contemporary phenomenon. He is also editor or joint editor of both the Cambridge and Oxford Companions to Bach and of the *Cambridge History of Seventeenth Century Music* (2005). His book on Bach's Passions, *Bach's Dialogue*

*with Modernity*, was published in 2010, and explores the ways in which Bach's passion settings relate to some of the broader concepts of modernity, such as subjectivity and time consciousness. John Butt's conducting engagements with the Dunedin Consort (since 2003) have included major Baroque repertory and several new commissions. His recording of *Messiah* in its first performed version (Dublin, 1742) was released in 2006 and received the Gramophone Award in the Baroque Vocal Category in 2007 and the MIDEM award for Baroque Music in 2008. Linn released his recording of Bach's *Matthew Passion* in March 2008, and Handel's *Acis and Galatea* in November 2008. His recording of Bach's Mass in B Minor was released in May 2010. He has been guest conductor with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, the Göttingen Handel Festspiele, the Berkeley Festival, the RSAMD Chamber Orchestra and Chorus and the Irish Baroque Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

John Butt also continues to be active as a solo organist and harpsichordist. Eleven recordings on organ, harpsichord and clavichord have been released by Harmonia Mundi. As conductor or organist he has performed throughout the world, including recent trips to Germany, France, Poland, Israel and Korea.

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Gramophone

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Recorded in St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh on 9-10 September 2013 (Disc 1) & 20 April 2016 (Disc 3, tracks 1-3 & 9-11);  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham on 27-28 August 2014 (Disc 2); St Paul's Church Knightsbridge, London on 1 October 2015  
(Es ist genug); and St George's Church, Chesterton, Cambridge on 18 June 2016 (Improvisations 'De Profundis').

Producer, Engineer & Editor: Adam Binks

Recorded at 24-bit / 96kHz resolution (DDD)

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