

The image shows the interior of a Gothic church. On the left, a large, ornate wooden organ with multiple tiers of pipes is visible. The church features high, pointed Gothic arches and a vaulted ceiling. In the foreground on the right, a decorative column is adorned with a red crown at the top, a blue oval medallion with the letters 'J R', another blue oval medallion with a religious scene, a third blue oval medallion with the letters 'M S', and a blue banner with the year '1760'.

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Norfolk Organists' Association

The art of music as related to the organ

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Front cover:

St Nicholas Church King's Lynn

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Back cover:

King's Lynn Minster hosting a virtual organ recital

Photograph Adrian Richards

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The Editor writes...



I got some CDs for Christmas! I say that with great delight and only a little surprise. Part of my history of working at a variety of record companies over many years, and still working a little for Chandos, means that I have a lot of CDs. Family and friends don't buy them for me as, I presume, they won't think they are special. I love them. As I mentioned, there was little surprise in me getting them for Christmas as I chose them myself as Christmas shopping was a rather different this year. One of the ones that I would like to share is reviewed later in the Journal.

This strange way of living, shopping and entertaining ourselves is extended to music-making. Live organ recitals have not yet returned, but they are substituted with an increasing number of online recitals. They are actually 'live' if you watch them at the prescribed time, but then they become simply online. In Norfolk both the Cathedral and King's Lynn Minster are going ahead with lots of recitals. (There are probably others that I am not aware of and I can include any others in our listing that are submitted to me via email.)

It's been good to be doing these recitals (six in thirteen weeks for me) as it has got me back to playing in a more constructive way; I find not having anything to play for really demotivating.

I am starting to do the 'tech' for the recitals now, (including when I am performing!) but the delight in sitting down in an empty, near-silent church last Tuesday lunchtime, whilst listening to another performer 'strike up' as people say, was actually a great thrill. A simple Snetzler Diapason in a real space has, I'm sure, rarely given so much delight and pleasure. Have a look at www.organrecitals.com to spot any recitals that may pique your interest.

The keyboards in the picture are the new ones in King's Lynn Minster (2015). This is a photo of them just installed. The interface between the organist and instrument is vital, these have a lovely tracker touch and are covered with the ivory saved from the 1962 Rushworth & Dreaper console.

Deadline for contributions for Summer issue is 31st May 2021 – please contribute, it's your Journal. I'm also looking for front and back cover photographs; high quality, high resolution and portait-ish in shape. If you would like one of your photographs featured, please do send them to me with credit information.

Adrian Richards

IN SEARCH OF AN IMAGE

Part 4

NICOLAUS BRUHNS (1665-1697)



Bruhns family home Schwabstedt, fig 1

Given that only five of his organ works have come down to us, one of which is now considered of uncertain authorship (and who can say if he ever actually wrote down more?), the regard in which Nicolaus Bruhns is held by many organists today is remarkably high. But then, as C.P.E. Bach testified, no less a personage than J.S. Bach considered the compositions of Bruhns as works of sufficient quality to be particularly worthy of study.

Sadly, no known image of Bruhns has come down to us, but thanks to the writings of such musical historians as Johann Mattheson (1681-1764) and Ernst Ludwig Gerber (1746-1819) the bare bones of his life story and musical ability can be outlined along with the very occasional morsel of added flesh such as the well-known anecdote of his virtuoso playing of the violin

(double-stopping and all) whilst accompanying himself on the organ pedals 'in a most pleasing manner.'

Like J.S. Bach, Bruhns was born into something of a musical dynasty. His grandfather Paul, a lutenist, was a municipal musician in the major Hanseatic city of Lübeck until his death in 1655. Nicolaus's eldest uncle, Friedrich Nicolaus (1637-1718) became Director of the Town Music in Hamburg, no less. His younger uncle, Peter (1641-98) was also a municipal musician in Lübeck, a violinist at a time when the Lübeck violin school was especially regarded and influential. It's inconceivable that Uncle Peter's services were not utilised by his celebrated contemporary and fellow citizen of Lübeck, Dieterich Buxtehude, not least when the latter required additional musicians for the impressive 'Abendmusiken' concert series each Advent in the Lübeck Marienkirche.

Nicolaus's father, Paul Bruhns the Younger, was born in Lübeck in 1640. He may have been a pupil of Franz Tunder (Buxtehude's father-in-law and immediate predecessor as organist at the Lübeck Marienkirche) before taking up the post of organist at the Jakobikirche in Schwabstedt, a small village situated a few miles south east of the town of Husum on the west coast of modern-day Schleswig-Holstein. It was in Schwabstedt that Nicolaus was born in 1665 and amazingly the house in which the family lived (apparently) still stands

just to the north of the church (*Fig. 1*). The church itself is a Romanesque structure and, despite various alterations, retains an interior furnished in a way highly redolent of the 17th century (*Fig. 2*).



fig.2

The organ Paul Bruhns played and on which he gave his gifted young son lessons was built in 1615 by Johan Lorentz of Flensburg, utilising parts of a previous instrument dating from around 1530-1550. It had 19 stops distributed across two manuals and an independent pedal department (which included a 16ft reed). It was said to be a particularly fine instrument noted both for its tonal qualities and appearance. Lorentz was a leading organ builder of the time, indeed he was appointed as organ builder to the Royal Danish court in the same year he worked on the Schwabstedt organ. Another of his instruments was the organ he completed in 1636 for the Marienkirche in Helsingør where a certain Dieterich Buxtehude happened to be the organist between 1660 and 1667.

Inevitably alterations were made to

the Schwabstedt organ during the 19th century and original material lost, but in 1980 a new organ (II/P 18) in a Baroque style was provided by Orgelbau Rudolf Neuthor of Kiel. Only the front pipes and casework of the Rückpositiv had survived from the time of Bruhns and these were duly incorporated into the new organ (*Fig. 3*). Since 2010 the instrument has officially been called the 'Nicolaus Bruhns Organ'.



fig.3

Mattheson tells us that the young Nicolaus thrived under his father's tuition, not only learning to play well 'but also to write excellent music for keyboard and voice.' In 1681, at the age of 16, he was sent by his parents to continue his studies with his uncle, Peter Bruhns in Lübeck where 'he then acquired great proficiency on the viola de gamba, and especially on the violin, and was held in great honour and

esteem by all musical cognoscenti of the time who knew him.’ [1] The most notable of those Lübeck musical cognoscenti was, of course, the great Dieterich Buxtehude who became Nicolaus’s teacher and whose compositional style the younger man ‘endeavoured in particular to emulate.’

Just imagine being able to observe and eavesdrop on some of those organ and composition lessons Nicolaus had with Buxtehude! As Kimberly Marshall remarks in her excellent chapter on historical performance practices in *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ*, ‘ten minutes at the keyboard with any one of these [past interpreters] would be far more illuminating than a surviving treatise or table of ornaments.’

Nicolaus would have had access to both of the organs in the Lübeck Marienkirche (see pages 12 & 13 of NOA Journal No.109, Autumn 2019 for some details and images of the instruments). The smaller but still substantial one in the ‘Totentanz’ chapel survived with fairly minimal alteration until its destruction by Allied bombs in March 1942. A truly regrettable loss. *Fig. 4* allows us at least a glimpse, albeit tantalising, of that console at which both Buxtehude and Bruhns sat and extemporised who knows what manner of extraordinary creations.

By 1686 Nicolaus had completed his

studies in Lübeck. Supported by a letter of recommendation from his illustrious teacher, the 21-year-old managed to secure a musical post in Copenhagen. The precise nature of the position is not known but Harald Vogel suggests he probably worked at the royal court. He may also have met the highly regarded organist of Copenhagen’s St. Nicholas church, one Johan Lorentz the Younger, the son of the builder of the Schwabstedt organ no less. Whatever his professional role it’s highly unlikely any of Nicolaus’s talents as a composer, virtuoso string player, or virtuoso organist were overlooked or allowed to lie dormant!



fig.4

After three years in Copenhagen,

Nicolaus was appointed in 1689 as organist of the Marienkirche in Husum, the thriving port just 6 miles or so from his birthplace. A home-coming of sorts.



fig.5



fig.6

17th century engravings (Figs. 5 & 6) and a painting of 1756 (Fig. 7) show the impressive late 15th century Gothic brick church dominating the centre of the bustling fishing town, the small but busy harbour lying just to its south and a not insignificant Renaissance Schloss (built in 1577-82 for the Schleswig Ducal court) to the north. The exact proportions of the Marienkirche's spire, topped as it was by a curious lantern-cum-spirelet affair, are hard to determine; it looks slightly different or more or less exaggerated in every depiction I've been able to find. It was, however, most definitely tall being reputedly some 96 metres high, or about 315 feet in old money. That makes it almost exactly the same height as the spire of Norwich Cathedral and

therefore a structure not easily ignored! On the flat western coastal plains and marshes of the Duchy of Schleswig it would have been visible for miles.



fig.7

The organ Nicolaus inherited at the Marienkirche was built in 1632 by Gottfried Fritzsche. Fritzsche was from Saxony in central eastern Germany but his instruments helped lay the foundations for the North German style of organ composition as developed by the likes of Scheidemann, Weckmann, Tunder, Reinken, Buxtehude and, ultimately, Bruhns himself. The only source of information I've yet found for the Husum instrument is Harald Vogel's fascinating and detailed description in his excellent and authoritative 2008 edition of the complete Bruhns organ works (Breitkopf EB 8663). It is sufficient to say here the organ Nicolaus played consisted of approximately 30 stops ranged over three manuals and pedals. It was situated in an organ loft on the north side of the nave (opposite the pulpit) and seems to have been a very fine instrument with pipework reputed to be of exceptional quality. Sadly, I have

yet to unearth an image of this organ, if indeed one actually exists.

Nicolaus clearly made quite an impact in his new post, so much so that when he was head-hunted within months of his appointment to become organist in the city of Kiel the authorities in Husum took the unprecedented step of raising his salary by a significant amount in a successful bid to keep him for themselves. It was in Husum that Nicolaus married one Anna Dorothea Hesse who, like her new husband, came from a dynasty of musicians. Indeed, her grandfather, Peter Hesse (c1585-1640) had been organist at the Lübeck Marienkirche. They had a son, Johan Paul who apparently chose a career in theology, not music.

Tragically, within only eight years of his arrival in Husum, Nicolaus was dead. He died on 29th March 1697, whether from illness or accident we simply do not know. He was just thirty-one. His younger brother, Georg (1666-1742) succeeded him as organist at the Marienkirche. The great church Nicolaus graced with his talent was gone too by 1810. Having been allowed to fall into alleged disrepair the town authorities chose to cut their losses and demolish it. With the exception of the fine bronze font of 1643 and a painted memorial panel of 1576 the fittings were either destroyed or auctioned off and dispersed, including some parts of the organ. All that survives of that now are some carvings preserved in

Husum's Nissen Museum. A late Gothic winged altar of about 1510 did make its way to the Jakobikirche in Schwabstedt, the church of Nicolaus's youth, where, appropriately, it still remains.



fig.8



fig.9

Figs 8 & 9 show two more depictions of the Gothic Marienkirche, both made after the church's demolition. Who can say which is the more accurate... if either! It was not until 1833 a replacement church was completed, much smaller in scale and footprint, and in the then fashionable neo-

classical style. Designed by Christian Frederik Hansen it did not at all impress Husum's greatest literary son, Theodor Storm (1817-1888). Though he never saw its Gothic predecessor Storm felt able to dismiss the replacement in no uncertain terms: 'In the place of the venerable building there was now a yellow, ugly rabbit house with two rows of square windows, [and] a tower like a pepper-box...' The building Storm so disparaged can be seen squatting on the right hand side of Fig 10. This evocative old photograph gives a vivid impression (apart from the absence of the mighty Gothic church) of a scene with which Nicolaus Bruhns would have been well acquainted, many of the buildings on the left predating his time in the town by some decades, even centuries.



fig.9

The old Gothic Marienkirche may have long gone but modern Husum retains enough of its historic fabric to persuade me that should I ever manage to get there (and to nearby Schwabstedt) the spirit of Nicolaus Bruhns could easily be evoked. The evocation of Buxtehude's spirit is

certainly possible at Lübeck which I was fortunate to visit in 1995 and where, mercifully, a goodly amount emerged unscathed by the bombs of 1942. For many years now I've been convinced much of the music of Buxtehude and Bruhns was inspired, consciously or not, by what they saw around them. Those exuberant, sometimes wild improvisatory passages in their organ *praeludia* rarely fail to provoke images and memories in my mind of the soaring spires, pointy pinnacles, and dancing brick gables of those great Hanseatic Gothic brick churches, the contrastingly austere expanses of plain brick walls and the wide, sky-filled landscapes beyond the city walls corresponding to the more formal, stable fugual interludes. The music seems such a perfect expression of the visual world these composers lived and worked in all their lives I can't believe the correlation is purely coincidental. I'm sure such notions could form the basis of a most interesting thesis, but I'm most certainly not the one to write it!

In addition to the organ works twelve of Nicolaus's Cantatas have come down to us. The influence of Buxtehude is clearly discernible and they deserve to be much better known. I would also thoroughly recommend a YouTube offering (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mP_etNMSf3Q) featuring the organist Balint Karosi at the console in conversation with Baroque violin

specialist, Edson Scheid. Together they explore the 'great' organ *Praeludium in e minor* in a bid to discern how much Nicolaus's virtuosity on the violin may have influenced his organ compositions. Their practical explorations shed much intriguing light along the way about how these organ works may have been performed.

Martin J. Cottam

[1] Intriguingly, in her biography of Dieterich Buxtehude, Kerala Snyder assumes Mattheson is referring here to the proficiency and esteem of Uncle Peter, not that of his nephew Nicolaus.

A DEREHAM ORGANIST



Dereham church an early photograph

The Scraggs of Norfolk were a highly talented family with roots in the fraternity of travelling thespians. William, of the Fisher & Scraggs 'theatre and orchestra' partnership, formed his own outfit in 1810 known as *Scraggs' Original Norfolk & Suffolk Company*. He married the sister of Dr John Beckwith snr, onetime organist at Norwich

Cathedral. Their son, Robert Beeston Scraggs, a comedic actor in his youth, chose to leave the stage behind and for a few years was proprietor and master of a boys' preparatory school in Cley. When the debt-laden school closed he settled in Dereham as an attorney's clerk. He was also clerk to the parish vestry in 1834 when his own son, Robert William (20), a lawyer's clerk and gifted musician, was elected organist at St Nicholas' church. He succeeded David Fisher who, I believe, was of the aforementioned family of entertainers.

By all accounts it was a contentious election. A 'trial of skill', umpired by Zecharia Buck, determined John Martin of Isleham to be the winner. The leaking of the result, published quite a to-do. Come the vote, Scraggs' supporters were said to have persuaded those usually indifferent to parish politics to turn out and support him. Ignoring professional advice, the vestry proceeded to elect what one correspondent called 'a less competent person'. In a nutshell, voters had refused to be told how to vote.

Martin issued a public notice to the effect that he had been the one 'recommended by Mr Buck', and reminded readers of his musical education under Robert Janes of Ely Cathedral. Not too aggrieved, he relocated to Dereham as a music teacher, and by the end of that decade both he and Scraggs were reported to be co-organists at the church. Pres-

umably, Martin was the more accomplished player, but voice training may have been Scraggs' forte. He had, apparently, an aptitude for both recruiting young folk into the choir and instructing them to a high standard. With theatre in his blood, he was also a popular performer and organiser in the secular musical life of the town and beyond.

Not so popular (according to the press) were alterations made to the organ in 1847. The work, carried out by William Hill, met with much approval – especially the addition of a trumpet stop – albeit the organ's removal from the west gallery did not. Among the 'drawbacks too palpable to be overlooked', as a result of this displacement, was the 'almost inaudible swell'. The re-opening by Edmund Chipp, a violinist in the Queen's Private Band, doubtless had a carnival air. He was to return in 1876 (when organist at Ely Cathedral) to open Hill's new organ.

Of Scraggs' two sons, the eldest (also Robert William) was a proficient musician who contributed to the inauguration recitals for the new Collins organ at Shipdham in 1854; the instrument, as well as an organist for the church, having been procured through the good offices of Scraggs. Organists proper were not ten-a-penny, and the pennies to pay them were not aplenty. Scraggs' salary, although average at around £20 (the same as at Shipdham!), was far less

than Lynn's and barely a living wage. His job as a clerk would not have been lucrative.

While unthinkable today, his piano playing for the opening of the Corn Hall in 1857 was excoriated by a newspaper: 'Nothing could be worse, or more ineffective, as table-singing, and nothing more drowning than the bad taste of what, we presume, was intended as an accompaniment, but rather exhibited a determination to play down the singers. It was wretched altogether.' His protests were disregarded. Kinder, gentler times they were not.



Edmund Chipp

The following year marked a turning point for Scraggs on his election as master of the Union Workhouse in Gressenhall, with his wife as matron.

Remuneration and perks were by no means ungenerous. There was an expectation that he would be a friend and protector of the poor, and probably he was: empathy might well have been in good supply for it is written that the Scraggs began their theatre days as strolling players. In their wanderings from place to place, 'strollers' were no strangers to hardships and privations.

John Martin took over as sole organist at the church (to 1894), while Scraggs became less active on the local music scene. Meanwhile, the younger Robert was living in London, and by his own account in 1861 was a financial administrator at a large warehouse (the census gives his occupation as organist but I cannot find where). In that year, he successfully applied for the top post of secretary and house steward at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. Described as a 'capital violinist', he became a member of the Norwich Philharmonic Society and organist for the Provincial Grand Lodge of Freemasons. Five years into his administration, the hospital's once healthy pension fund was put on life support, this (not unremarkably) coinciding with his dismissal in relation to embezzlement. Being that he disappeared without trace, a warrant issued for his arrest was not executed. It was 'supposed he had left the country'.

Scraggs, a broken man no doubt – what with his own illness, the deaths

of his wife and father, and a son having scarpered off to goodness knows where – took premature retirement from the workhouse in 1868. His offer to reimburse the hospital was declined though he did forfeit hefty sureties put up for his son. One of his last contributions locally, out of 'characteristic kindness', was organising a benefit concert for Litcham's schoolmaster who, it was noted, exemplified the dedicated honorary church organist. Not for the first time did Scraggs highlight the difficulties in acquiring capable (if any) organists for smaller parishes.



St Nicholas, Dereham organ today

Shortly thereafter, he moved to Carlisle where his other son, William Beckwith Scraggs, was superintendent of police. That he planned to continue teaching music is evident from published advertisements, but he died suddenly in the same year (1869) at the age of 55. The tragicomedy once acted out on the stage by his forebears was likely nothing compared to his own story.

I doubt if he saw his errant son again; perhaps work as a ship's pianist had paid his passage to warmer climes. Although Scraggs did not live to see Hill's organ at Dereham, some ranks familiar to him (including Smith's) were retained and are still there today in the Richard Bower rebuild. As for his time at Gressenhall, there cannot have been many organists who went into the workhouse as the boss – and even fewer who, like him, came out poorer than when they went in!

David Secker

FATHER WILLIS IN NORWICH

I enjoyed Pru Goldsmith's delightful article on Father Willis in Norwich. It was of course rebuilt by Willis III, Father Henry's grandson.

I'm perplexed by her saying Walker's placed the console under the pulpit in 1930 and that it was re-sited where we used to know it, in the midst of the congregation. I've seen no trace of Walker work and am challenged as to whether the console is 1930, which I had assumed, or 1950. The console is still the Willis 3 console with the black fascia and with rocking tablets over the keys; Willis 3 wasn't kind to Father Willis's concepts and had no qualms in altering things which we now find magnificent in the Father Willis organs.



The top of this list is perhaps the Flute Harmonique 4ft which we once again find charming; Henry III, and indeed Henry IV, regularly cut these in half, well less than a half, fitted canisters on them and called them Flute Couverte. Such happened at Princes Street. Krummhorn madness also prevailed and in 1930 the Swell Oboe 8 was taken out and replaced by the Corno di Bassetto from the Great revoiced as a Krummhorn 4ft; the Oboe was placed on a pair of unit chests sited either side of the swell soundboard in the widened swellbox, these with a Willis III electro-pneumatic action. Removal of the Corno di Bassetto gave the tuner a little more space on the passage board between swell and great; this was the form of the organ when I used to tune it in 1970's. Some will remember Carl Grainger who was the organist then.

The recent reordering of the church was amazing and a super transformation. They kept the organ but only at the last minute was I asked to move the console and store it during the work. It was a typical architect/builder's job with no thoughts for the organ. When we arrived to remove the console the pews and floor had gone with just floor joists with deep gaps beneath each making console removal, even walking near to it difficult. There was no plan of organ refurbishment. When we returned the console all the wiring had gone including the three-phase blower control wiring – but the

electrician was still there, and the skip, and he was able to retrieve the mains contactors and control gear and refit. Sadly, he had also done the usual which is to cut all the wiring to organ-builders internal lighting; refitting a swell box light without disturbing pipework can be frustrating fun.

When we returned again Lusher's had made their 'new' console case, an oak faced box around the Willis III console. The fine piece of console furniture quality casing in mahogany is still intact underneath. The link to the console is via a coaxial cable so that was easily restored and eventually (after a few phone calls to retired Vic Hackworthy, its maker) the Christie transmission was working again. Yes, it would have been easy to make the console mobile; that idea was suggested but wasn't taken up.

The poor Father Willis organ has been through a few traumas, none of the rebuilds kind to it, but it is nearly all still there and ripe for restoration as Father Willis built it. It could then again be as fine to play and hear as is the Father Willis in St Nicholas Chapel, Kings Lynn. It is so sad that this church which doubled up as fine concert venue has closed.

Richard Bower

DEATH OF LOUIS VIERNE



On a visit to Paris some years ago I bought a book entitled *Maurice Duruflé – Souvenirs et autres écrits* compiled by Frédéric Blanc. It contains an account of the death of Vierne written by Duruflé who was present in the organ loft on that fateful occasion. The following translation is by Isabel Watson.

'It was during a recital of his works on the organ of Notre-Dame de Paris on 2nd June 1937, given under the auspices of Les Amis de l'Orgue, that Louis Vierne collapsed at the keyboard, struck down by an embolism.

By a strange coincidence, he had just played the last piece of his *Triptyque*, entitled *Stèle pour un enfant défunt*, (funeral monument for a dead child). As though with a supreme hesitation, death had waited until the very moment he had played the final chord; then, wordlessly and without pain, he slipped away. His soul just soared towards God, discreetly and noiselessly.

The audience which was crowded into

the shadowy space of Notre-Dame that evening then heard a lingering deep note; the master as he fell had pressed down on one of the pedals. It was as if the organ was strangely groaning. No-one on that night of tragedy will forget the sense of general bewilderment, the anxious wait outside the Hôtel-Dieu where his body had been taken, the final glimmers of hope which we struggled to cling to despite everything, then the awful news, the despair, tears and sobs among all those gathered on the Place du Parvis.

For Louis Vierne was not just a great and much-admired musician, but also a man to whom we were deeply attached.'



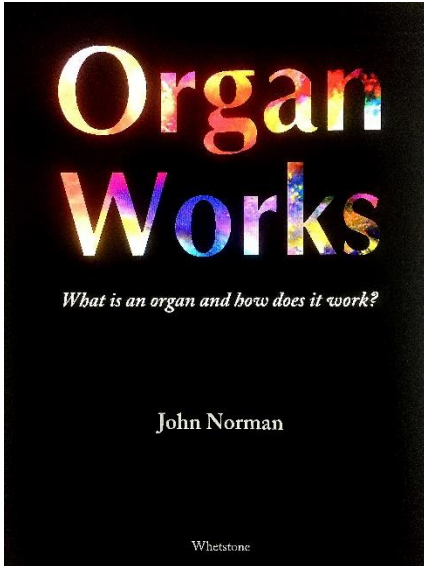
Vierne 1930
(Monaco Cathedral from Ron's book)

Ron Watson

BOOK REVIEW

Organ Works by John Norman

(Whetstone, 2020, ISBN-13 978 1 5272 47628, £45, 270 pages)



The name of John Norman will be a familiar one to most members of the Association not least because of his ancestral connection to the once enormous Norwich-based organ building firm of Norman & Beard (Hill, Norman & Beard from 1916). Readers of his regular column in *Organists' Review* and those fortunate enough to have attended any of his talks will be well aware of his gift for imparting considerable yet digestible amounts of sometimes complex information with great clarity and a deceptively easy manner. His latest book, reviewed here, is a further manifestation of that gift. It is, in

essence, a distillation of his extensive wisdom and knowledge garnered over a long lifetime's first-hand practical engagement with every aspect of the organ builder's art (and science!). On that score Norman makes no secret of his gratitude and indebtedness to his late father, Herbert Norman.

Profusely illustrated throughout with well-chosen full colour and black & white photographs and diagrams this volume is an immediately attractive presentation. Apart from one or two exceptions the quality of reproduction is excellent. The type is of a good size and well-spaced so as to be friendly and legible to all but the most compromised of eyesights. The main body of text is supplemented by the employment of additional 'boxes' of text printed in white on a coloured ground in the side margins. These, in effect, obviate the need for footnotes which can so often detract from the overall appearance of a page. The boxes solve the problem of imparting further information and detail about a particular aspect of the topic being discussed without interrupting the flow of the main text or overloading it unnecessarily. The reader who seeks further depth can easily access it by referring to these additional nuggets as and when desired.

In his opening chapter, *What is an Organ?* Norman declares, 'the very complexity which explains the wide-ranging appeal of the organ can, however, be a deterrent to the novice.

This book attempts to explain the organ from the beginning, without assuming much prior knowledge. It may also be beneficial to the experienced reader as an *aide-memoire* of the fundamental principles that guide the design and construction of the organ.’ In an Author’s note at the very start of the book Norman also remarks that, ‘many readers will wish to consult individual chapters that interest them, rather than read in chapter order. To facilitate this and avoid multiple cross-references, there is inevitably some duplication for which the reader’s indulgence is sought.’ To that end there is a different coloured band assigned to each chapter printed along the top of every page allowing the reader to spot at a glance where the individual chapters start and finish.



As I worked my way through chapter 2, *The History of the Organ* I did find myself wondering at times if the text was perhaps a little too weighted toward the novice rather than the experienced reader. Many of the expected key facts, dates and names are there (and the emphasis, as through most of the book, is on the

British perspective of the organ’s design and development) but I couldn’t help feeling it was perhaps a mite superficial in its detail. ‘Father’ Smith and Renatus Harris and their infamous ‘Battle of the Organs’ are mentioned, for example, but what of the all-important and new French inspired colours Harris and the Dallams brought to the Restoration organs of the second half of the 17th century following their exile in France during the Commonwealth? I needn’t have worried. That part of the story comes in a later chapter. Indeed, as you progress through the various chapters (*Matching the Organ to the Building, Tonal Structure, Organ Pipes’, Voicing and Tuning;* etc, etc) you quickly discover you are being fed an enormous amount of highly informative nourishment without fear of indigestion. This is Norman’s great skill as an educator, combining depth with readability and at a good but measured pace. The occasional, but unobtrusive cross-referencing to further mentions of a particular detail in other chapters is very helpful. In short, the book is something of an educational masterclass in the way Norman progressively provides the building blocks for a remarkably thorough edifice of knowledge on the chosen subject.

Norman is not afraid to proffer some gently forthright but highly pertinent views from time to time but views born of logical reasoning and practical insight, not personal prejudice. In

addition, he refreshingly counters some of the rather lazy assumptions one often encounters in too many books on the organ. How many times have you read how organ stops were often made in imitation of the sound of a particular orchestral instrument, for example? Referring to the naming of some organ stops after orchestral instruments, both current and obsolete, Norman declares, '...these names are merely convenient points of reference. In actual fact, the basic sounds of the organ have no orchestral equivalents at all!' A small point perhaps, but spot on. The organ is very much an instrument in its own right!

The sheer range and extent of Norman's expertise is quite remarkable, as is his ability to communicate complexity with such clarity, frequently guiding the reader safely through what for many could be a veritable minefield of specialist knowledge. For myself I found the chapters on pipe construction and voicing particularly interesting and illuminating. Here, in one place and easily accessed, is all I really need to know about the mysteries of scaling and cut-ups and nicking, etc, etc. I've asked the likes of John Plunkett no end of times to remind me what does what to the tone and speech of a pipe but I keep forgetting. There'll be no more googling or searching for that half-remembered mention in whatever book it was now though. It's all here in one neat, colour-coded chapter!

The same could be said of the chapters on *The Console; Key Action and Stop Action; Soundboards*, and *Raising the Wind* for example. I confess I found myself struggling to properly comprehend and absorb what I was reading at times, but that has considerably more to do with the way my brain works (or doesn't!) than Norman's ability to explain the complexities of such specialist aspects of engineering and construction. Mechanical, pneumatic, electric, computerised... it's all calmly and elegantly described and deciphered, splendidly supported with photographs and well-drawn diagrams (many of which are Norman's own or his father's).

Other chapters include *A Glossary of Organ Stop Names, What an Organ Looks Like; The Swell*, and *Care and Restoration*. Of all the chapters I found *Some Organ Builders* perhaps the most disappointing. It provides an extensive but not exhaustive list of builders of organs in Britain but most of the entries are unavoidably brief, frustratingly so at times given some of the tantalising titbits of information included within them. Definitely a case of whetting one's appetite! However, the omission of known lifespan dates of the various individuals mentioned seems a curious and unnecessary oversight in such a commendably thorough publication. There is a short but helpful bibliography and a full index.

If forced to sum up this volume with one word it would probably be 'comprehensive' (closely followed by 'clarity', 'expertise', and 'depth'). It is not an inexpensive book but few such specialist publications are. I would certainly call it an indispensable purchase for anyone wishing to have virtually everything they need to do with the tonal output and inner workings of an organ in one attractive, easy-to-read and navigate volume.

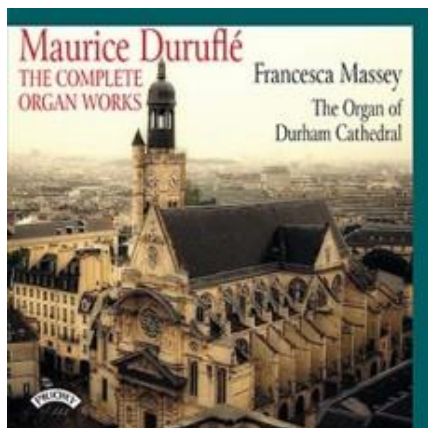
Martin J. Cottam

CD REVIEW

Maurice Duruflé

The complete organ works

Priory PRCD 1230 £11.99



It's probably well-known in the association that I rate Francesca very highly. I have known her and her playing for many years and have seen and heard her play many times. One of the joys of watching her play is

that one is able to see the music running through her, out through the fingers and into the keys; think Glenn Gould for overt musical expression, but without the singing. (You can probably find her on YouTube playing on London Organ Day – although that's not yet happened as I write.)

The playing on this Duruflé disc is without blemish as one would expect. (When she made her disc at King's Lynn Minster, Neil Collier, who was recording and producing, said to me that with most players you are waiting for them to make a mistake and ultimately re-do it, but with Francesca she just doesn't go wrong!) The registration is as expected when there are so many directions from the composer, as are the speeds – Duruflé left little to chance as he perfected his music.

The sounds emanating from the Durham organ are perhaps not quite what one might expect for this music and are *possibly* the only thing that will stop members from investigating this excellent disc. The Durham organ is too good; it's spot on in tune (very un-French), it is so well regulated that every note is perfect, nothing sticks out, nothing draws attention to itself – apart from the huge noise some of the big reed stops produce.

As I said, the playing is immaculate, every note is beautifully articulated, in place, even, and neat and tidy, giving the listener great insight into the

music and its component parts. That is not to say it's unmusical, because, as I said, musicality is there in spades. I only have slight reservations because the package is just that little bit too good – I would love to hear her play this repertoire at St-Étienne-du-Mont, Notre-Dame Cathedral or Saint Sulpice where the vagaries of French tuning and mechanics might just give a moment of surprise. The release comes with the performer's own notes, a biography and complete specification. (I wish Priory and other producers would give us more photographs.) Highly recommended.

Adrian Richards

NOA QUIZ 2021



The Norfolk Organists Events for 2021 started in the traditional manner with an adaption of Quiz and Chips cleverly arranged by Jeremy and Pamela to enable participation on Zoom. Teams were of course smaller and I personally was severely disadvantaged by not having Martin to answer the difficult questions. To try and keep things as normal as possible, I collected Fish and Chips which were

consumed immediately before the event and with no subsequent driving was involved there was the added bonus of alcohol. Competing teams were Tim Patient, Michael and Pam Flatman, Ron and Isabel Watson, Harry and Melanie Macey, Matthew Bond, Jamie and Liz Dawes, Mathew and Sylvia Martin, Clair MacArthur, Martin Cottam, Ellie, Lisa and myself so the event was well-supported. Jeremy and Pamela had worked hard compiling six very varied sets of questions; Pot Luck, Composer or Pasta; City Photos; Film Titles in Translation; Latin Translation, and Film/TV Theme Music. The Questions and answers are reproduced here, there really was something for everyone and scores throughout were neck and neck with little disadvantage to smaller teams. Totalling the overall scores showed Melanie and Harry as worthy winners closely followed by Isabel and Ron Watson, then Liz Dawes and Jamie Dawes, well done all! Many thanks again to Jeremy and Pamela for all the hard preparation work and actually running the event.

John Hanton

Round 1: Pot Luck

- Q1 How many speaking stops does Norwich Cathedral organ have?
- Q2 Who is the current Poet Laureate?
- Q3 Where is the Scrovegni Chapel?

- Q4 When did Norwich City FC start wearing its yellow and green strip?
- Q5 Which is further West Bristol or Timbuktu?
- Q6 Who play the ladies in Ladies in Lavender?
- Q7 When did Norwich City last get to the semi-final of the FA Cup?
- Q8 Which US state has the most letters in its name?
- Q9 Who built the first steam locomotive?
- Q10 Who wrote Captain Corelli's Mandolin?

ANSWERS

- Q1 105
- Q2 Simon Armitage
- Q3 Padua
- Q4 1907
- Q5 Timbuktu (3 Degrees W, Bristol 2.5 Degrees W)
- Q6 Judy Dench and Maggie Smith
- Q7 1992
- Q8 Massachusetts/North Carolina/ South Carolina
- Q9 Richard Trevithick (in 1804)
- Q10 Louis de Bernières

Round 2: Pasta or Composer

- Q1 Tuffoli
- Q2 Bertoni
- Q3 Sorprese
- Q4 Testaroli
- Q5 Piccinni
- Q6 Mercadente
- Q7 Filini
- Q8 Pinottini
- Q9 Campagnoli
- Q10 Capellini

ANSWERS

- Q1 Tuffoli – pasta
- Q2 Bertoni – composer
18thC organist of St Marks
- Q3 Sorprese– pasta
- Q4 Testaroli– pasta
- Q5 Piccinni – composer
18thC opera
- Q6 Mercadente – composer
19thC opera
- Q7 Filini – pasta
- Q8 Pinottini – composer Maria Theresa Agnesi 18thC
- Q9 Campagnoli – composer 18-19thC violinist
- Q10 Capellini – pasta

Round 3: World Cities from the air

ANSWERS

- Q1 Paris
- Q2 Rio de Janeiro
- Q3 Barcelona
- Q4 Hong Kong
- Q5 Mecca
- Q6 New York
- Q7 Vancouver
- Q8 London

Round 4: Film titles [lost] in translation

- Q1 The teeth from the sea (France) 1975
- Q2 Knight of the Night (Spain) 2008
- Q3 The Happy Dumpling to be, Who Talks, and solves Agricultural Problems (Hong Kong) 1995
- Q4 Vaseline (Argentina) 1978
- Q5 Mom I Missed the Plane! (France) 1990

- Q6 The Young People Who Traverse Dimensions While Wearing Sunglasses (France) 1999
- Q7 The Rebel Novice Nun (Mexico) 1965
- Q8 I Will Marry a Prostitute to Save Money (China) 1990
- Q9 Go, With Bath (China) 2010
- Q10 American Virgin Man (China) 1999

ANSWERS

- Q1 Jaws
- Q2 The Dark Knight
- Q3 Babe
- Q4 Grease
- Q5 Home Alone
- Q6 The Matrix
- Q7 The Sound of Music
- Q8 Pretty Woman
- Q9 Hot Tub Time Machine
- Q10 American Pie

Round 5: How's your Latin

- Q1 What family of insects are Coccinellidae? (they have spots)
- Q2 What bird is Troglodytes troglodytes
- Q3 What flower is this: myosotis
- Q4 What is this: Vox Humana
- Q5 What animal is Vulpes vulpes
- Q6 Insula Thesauraria is a translation of what children's classic
- Q7 What disease is this: Parotitis epidemica
- Q8 Avem Occidere Mimicam is a translation of what American classic

- Q9 What fruit is this: Citrus aurantium
- Q10 Which Psalm begins: Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius

ANSWERS

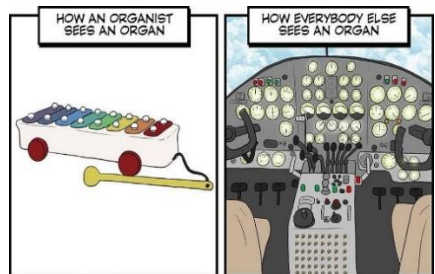
- Q1 Ladybirds
- Q2 Wren
- Q3 Forget me not
- Q4 An organ stop
- Q5 Fox
- Q6 Treasure Island
- Q7 Mumps
- Q8 To Kill a Mockingbird
- Q9 Seville Orange (or Bitter Orange)
- Q10 Psalm 150

Round 6: The Music of TV shows

Q1 – 8 plus a ninth, which is a film, but I couldn't resist including it. Bonus point for recognising the singer

ANSWERS

- Q1 Jonathan Creek
- Q2 Inspector Morse
- Q3 Brideshead Revisited
- Q4 University Challenge
- Q5 Hey Duggee
- Q6 Have I got news for you
- Q7 Steptoe and Son
- Q8 Pride and Prejudice
- Q9 Room with a View/Kiri Te Kanawa



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www.ToneDeafComics.com

WILLIAM HENRY HARRIS

(1883 – 1973)



Harris was born in Fulham, in London and became a chorister at Holy Trinity, Tulse Hill (in the London borough of Lambeth). At the age of 14 he took up the position of assistant organist at St David's Cathedral in Wales under Herbert Morris. When he was 16, he gained a scholarship to the Royal College of Music where he was taught by Sir Walter Parratt, Charles Wood and Henry Walford Davies.

Harris was organist at St Augustine's Church, Edgbaston from 1911 to 1919 and concurrently assistant organist at Lichfield Cathedral. During this time, he also taught at the Birmingham School of Music (now Royal Birmingham Conservatoire). In 1919 he

moved to Oxford where he became organist at New College and in 1929 Christ Church. While at Oxford, he conducted the Oxford Bach Choir (1925-1933) and was instrumental in founding and conducting the Opera Club, which put on the pioneering production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* staged by Jack Westrup in 1925. In 1933 he was appointed organist at St George's Chapel, Windsor in succession to Charles Hylton Stewart. There, he was at his most productive: composing for the Three Choirs Festival, conducting at both the 1937 and 1953 coronations, and producing two orchestral pieces premiered at The Proms: the overture *Once Upon a Time* (1940) and the *Heroic Prelude* (1942).

Bruce Nightingale, who became senior chorister at Windsor during the wartime years, describes 'Doc H' as having 'a fat, usually jolly face with a few wisps of hair across an otherwise bald head.' Although choir practice was normally conducted in a 'benign atmosphere,' Nightingale recounts that Harris would occasionally complain of a 'bately practise' and, on the rare occasions he considered a performance mediocre, would scold the choirboys in a loud stage whisper from the organ loft. Harris was involved in the musical education of the teenage Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret Rose, who spent the wartime period at Windsor Castle. Every Monday he would direct madrigal practice in the Red Drawing Room at Windsor, where the two

Princesses sang alongside four of the senior choristers with the lower voices augmented by Etonians, Grenadier Guards and members of the Windsor and Eton Choral Society.

Between 1923 to 1953 Harris served as a professor of organ and harmony at the Royal College of Music. He was also president of the Royal College of Organists (1946–8), and director of musical studies at the Royal School of Church Music (1956–61). After retirement from St George's Windsor in 1961 Harris and his wife Kathleen went to live in Petersfield, Hampshire. Kathleen had suffered from deafness since 1925, but in the early 1960s her hearing was partially restored. She died in 1968. Harris had reached the age of 90 at his death five years later.

His most famous works are two anthems for unaccompanied double choir, *Faire is the heaven* (1925), a setting of Edmund Spenser's poem *An Hymne of Heavenly Beautie*, and *Bring us, O Lord God* (first heard in Windsor on 29 October 1959), a setting of a poem by John Donne; and *Strengthen ye the weak hands* (1949) for choir and organ. The canticles Harris in A and Harris in A minor are still sung at Evensong in a number of Anglican cathedrals. The hymn tune *Alberta* (often used for the words Lead, Kindly Light), and various Anglican psalm chants remain in the repertoire.

Martyn Marshall

OBITUARY

Michael Davies (1944 - 2021)

Michael was born into a military family and was schooled at the Kings School, Ely. It was here that he became a chorister in the cathedral and also studied piano and organ with Arthur Wills.

His first organist post was at St Peter's, Carlton Colville near Lowestoft. In 1977 he was appointed to the post of organist and choirmaster at St Margaret's, Lowestoft. Michael remained at Lowestoft for ten years and during that time the music at the church flourished

After a period of time playing at a URC on the south coast, he returned to East Anglia to take on the job of organist at Great Yarmouth Parish church (now Minster). In 1995 he had just accepted the post of organist at St Michael's, Framlingham, but a severe stroke prevented him taking this up and it ended his organ playing days.

I ran a choir for a number of years, and when we sang evensong at both Norwich and Ely cathedrals in the early 1990s, Michael was the organist. Recordings from these, and of his days at St Margaret's were used at his funeral, which took place in St John's Church, Harleston in February 2021.

Michael was a quiet, humble man and an excellent organist, his cathedral

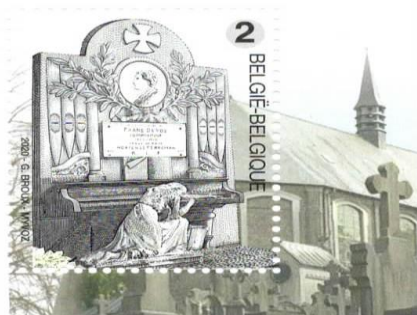
background and tuition always clearly evident. Although Michael was never a member of the NOA, I'm sure there are members will remember him.

Steven Kirk

CORRECTION

CHRISTMAS 2020 – the stamps, featured churches and their organs

In Mark Jameson's article above in Journal 114, I inadvertently squeezed the images of the final two stamps for which I apologise. I reproduce the images correctly below.



RECITALS

NORWICH CATHEDRAL

Live-streamed recitals

Search 'Norwich Cathedral Services' on YouTube or

visit www.cathedral.org.uk/whats-on/events

Watch live or catch up later!

Wednesdays 2.30 – 3.00pm

March 3 George Inscoe

(Assistant Organist)

March 10 Ashley Grote

(Master of Music)

March 17 George Inscoe

(Assistant Organist)

March 24 Ashley Grote

(Master of Music)

April 21 David Dunnett

(Organist)

April 28 George Inscoe

(Assistant Organist)

May 5 Ashley Grote

(Master of Music)

Wednesday 31 March 7.30pm (online and in person)

Meditation for Holy Week

Le Chemin de la Croix – Marcel Dupré, played by David Dunnett (Organist)

Easter Bank Holiday recital (online only)

Monday 5 April 11.00am George Inscoe (Assistant Organist)

Wednesday 12 May 7.30pm (online only)

L'Ascension – Olivier Messiaen, played by George Inscoe (Assistant Organist)

**Spring Bank Holiday recital
(online and in person)**

Monday 31 May 11.00am
David Dunnett (Organist)

SUMMER EVENING RECITAL SERIES

*All of these concerts will be open to
an audience (no ticket required) and
live-streamed online, subject to
current government guidance on
COVID-19*

THURSDAYS at 7.30pm

June 17 George Inscoc
(Assistant Organist)
July 15 Ashley Grote
(Master of Music)
August 19 David Dunnett
(Organist)
September 16 George Inscoc
(Assistant Organist)
October 21 Ashley Grote
(Master of Music)
November 18 David Dunnett
(Organist)



*Sunlight pipes: The Old Meeting House Norwich
Martin Cottam*

KING'S LYNN MINSTER

Online recitals

www.kingslynnminster.org

Every Tuesday lunchtime 12:30 and
available for a week on the Minster
Facebook page

www.facebook.com/KingsLynnMinster

March 9th Adrian Richards
King's Lynn Minster
March 16th Richard Vogt
All Saints' Litcham
March 23rd Adrian Richards
King's Lynn Minster
March 30th Peter Godden
King's Lynn
April 6th Adrian Richards
King's Lynn Minster
April 13th Jonathan Chaddock
King's Lynn
April 20th Adrian Richards
King's Lynn Minster
April 27th Mark Jones
Holt Parish Church
May 4th Peter Godden
King's Lynn
May 9th Adrian Richards
King's Lynn Minster
June 1st Elinor Hanton
July 13th Alessandro Bianchi
July 20th Dr Iain Quinn
August 24th Dr David Baker

These recitals will give way as soon as
possible to live/actual/in-person
recitals same time, same place,
possibly as early as 18th May if
permitted.



Norfolk Organists' Association

The art of music as related to the organ



EVENTS

Members' online recital: date to be confirmed, but late March or early April. To be followed by an online meet-up and chat.

Virtual AGM 13th March 7.30pm

The link to join has been sent *via* email and members can also join via phone call.

First in-person event: Desert Island Discs

22nd May at 2pm at St Andrew's Church Eaton NR4 6NW

Castaway Margaret Smith discusses eight pieces of music that are particularly meaningful. (Subject to Government unlocking reviews being fulfilled.)

The events team thank everyone for their support and patience through this confusing time, and hope we will soon be enjoying more events together again.

Non-members are warmly invited to attend most events for £5.

For full details of events see the NOA website and our Facebook page. Where an event has a closing date for orders or reservations, please do not leave it to the last minute! Please let the sub-committee have feedback and ideas for future events. Enquiries: ask any member of the Events sub-committee.

Please let Elinor Hanton know if you would like to do a write-up of an event. elinor.hanton@btinternet.com. New writers are welcome. Reports and good quality digital photographs should be emailed to our Journal editor, Adrian Richards gravissima64@outlook.com.

SUFFOLK ORGANISTS' ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Norfolk members are welcomed to events arranged by Suffolk Organists' Association, but should contact them via the website. See www.suffolkorganists.org.uk for more information

