

A photograph of a grand concert hall. In the foreground, rows of white seats with blue cushions are visible. In the background, a large pipe organ with many tall, thin pipes is mounted on a wooden structure. A group of musicians, including organists and instrumentalists, are seated on the stage in front of the organ. A large, ornate chandelier hangs from the ceiling.

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Norfolk Organists' Association

The art of music as related to the organ

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Front Cover

The 1978 Rieger-Kloss organ in the Organ Hall, Chisinau, Moldova
(Photo: David Shuker)

Back Cover

The Cavaillé-Coll/Merklin organ in St-Antoine-des-Quinze-Vingts, Paris
(Photo: Martin Cottam)

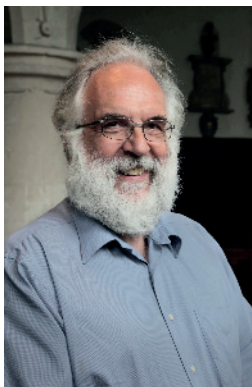
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Notes from the Editor

A little practice for the 2026 Quiz 'n Chips - where is the organ shown on the front cover? A little clue - write your answers on a 50 *lei* banknote. All will be revealed on p. 16

The recent Young Organists Platform at Aylsham (p. 2) showed once again that new young organists are coming onto the scene. Julian Haggett at St Peter Mancroft is clearly an inspiring organ teacher and we look forward to seeing how his students develop over the years.

The article by Martin Cottam about the first part of a memorable weekend in Paris (see p. 8) prompts me to draw attention to a new book on the

life and work of Aristide Cavaillé-Coll. The book is the product of many years of research by Dr Gerald Sumner and is entitled *Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, Organ Builder of Paris: The British Connections*, published by the British Institute of Organ Studies (BIOS) and available through the BIOS website (www.bios.org.uk). I hope to include a review of this very interesting book in the Winter issue of the *Journal*.

The RCO *Play the Organ Year* is already well advanced and I have the impression that the profile of organs and organ playing has been significantly raised by the many events that have taken place so far around the country. I was at the Heritage Day event at Reading Town Hall recently which focused on the historic 1864 Willis organ (NPOR N09839). There were many families in attendance and at one point there was an opportunity for people to play the organ. I think that few would fail to be impressed by the sound coming out of such a powerful instrument at the simple touch of a key.

YOUNG ORGANISTS' PLATFORM CONCERT : 2025

Aylsham Parish Church

Saturday, 2 August 2025

Our Young Organists' Platform Concert is hosted by Aylsham Parish Church in partnership with the Norfolk Organists' Association. This annual event gives an opportunity for young organ students to show to the general public what they can do and how they are progressing; it also demonstrates to the players that their efforts are recognised and valued. After all, we need good organists for the future and, just in the past year, we must acknowledge the work of the RCO and Anna Lapwood in drawing the organ and its music to the attention of a wide spectrum of the public.

As a retired Grammar School Head of Music, I realise that most young students of stringed instruments, brass, woodwind, percussion, guitars, etc; may play in various ensembles but the organ is a study carried out largely in isolation. In general,

unless school music teachers are organists themselves, it is unlikely that the class music syllabus will be able to flag up the glories of the organ. During my career, I made numerous mini-bus trips to organs to show children the wonders of the instrument and its music.

In these times of diminishing congregations and the incursion of other styles of 'worship music', we are learning that we must move away from the obvious association of the organ with the church. Thousands of fine organ recordings, video-clips etc; are available at one click; this avenue should also be encouraged. When you see a family visit one of our glorious Norfolk churches, I urge you to summon the children to the organ console for a demo and to have a go. It is a joy to see their eyes light up as they witness the quietest Dulciana, the Tuba, the full Swell, the Full organ and the magic of those pedals!

On August 2nd over eighty people gathered to support our five young performers of 2025. After delicious coffee and cake provided by Melanie Macey and



The big screen at Aylsham with Zihuan Zhou

members of Aylsham choir, the concert began. The players were pupils of Julian Haggett, organist of St Peter Mancroft, and we thank Julian for his teaching, his encouragement and his splendid regional work for the RCO. This year's players were all very young, from Y6 to Y10.

For the order of performance, names were, as usual, drawn out of a hat in advance.

Henry Lane

Prelude and Fugue in F BWV 556 ...J.S. Bach

Kyrie ... Frescobaldi

Beatrix Goode

Herzlich tut mich verlangen BWV 727 ... J.S.Bach

Tuba Tune ... C.S.Lang

Winston Willis

Gottes Sohn ist kommen BWV 703 ... J.S.Bach

Prelude in E minor ... César Franck

September Cubbage

Of the Father's love begotten ... Flor Peeters

Vieux Noël ... César Franck

Das ist ein köstlich Ding ... arr. Gunther Martin Götsche

Zihuan Zhou

Prelude in F major ...Johann Ludwig Krebs

Rorate Cæli ... Jeanne Demessieux

Magnificat ... Alexandre Guilmant

The whole concert was most enjoyable. Aylsham's three-manual Norman & Beard (1911) with its exhaust-pneumatic action, its very light playing action and its push-me-pull-you stop system, is far from typical or easy to manage but our performers overcame its whims and exploited the colours of the instrument, especially some of the lovely quiet voices. Their musicianship bodes well for their futures. Aylsham's big screen for organ concerts enhances audience involvement and enjoyment.

After some rousing applause, our players took a bow and were presented with money to spend on sheet music - or more probably, these days, towards a sheet music I-pad. We wish them all well as they move on in their studies.

Our distinguished published composer Ron Watson presented each of the young organists with a signed copy of his popular "Suite for Mrs Thing". I hope they will enjoy learning some of the Suite's attractive and well-written pieces.



The players receiving their money from Harry Macey

Thanks are due to the many people who contributed in any way to the success of this event including Melanie Macey and members of Aylsham choir for the refreshments and Clive and Beverley McCombie for producing the souvenir colour programme.

The Young Organists' Platform Concert 2026 will be on Saturday August 1st. If you know of other organ teachers with young students, please let me know.

Harry Macey

THE EAST OF ENGLAND ORGAN DAY

Saturday 31 May 2025

English Martyrs, Cambridge

A few years ago it was decided that it would be useful for the secretaries of the local organists' associations in London and the East of England to meet together occasionally. Due to the large geographical area, meetings are held remotely. One outcome at

the start of these meetings was to hold an East of England Organ Day – the first of these was organised by the Essex Organists' Association and held at Chelmsford Cathedral in 2023.

At a subsequent meeting it was decided to hold this day every two years and so it was that this year saw the second East of England Organ Day. This time it was organised by the Cambridge Organists' Association and held



The 1894 Abbot & Smith organ at Our Lady of the Assumption and the English Martyrs in Cambridge (Photo: Tim Patient)

at the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and the English Martyrs (often known as OLEM) in Cambridge. There were about 45 people at the day although unfortunately I was one of only two members of the Norfolk Organists' Association present.

The day begin with the usual registration and coffee and a chance to meet other like-minded people from the region and further afield. This was followed by a brief introduction and welcome from Charles Hall, President of the Cambridge Organists' Association, followed by Nigel Kerry, Director of Music at OLEM. We were introduced to the history of the Church and the organ. The organ was designed by Charles Villiers Stanford and built by Abbot and Smith. The organ dates from a similar time to the Church – the very end of the nineteenth century.

Following the introduction and welcome, there was a keynote speech by Alexander Berry, Director of Music at Great St. Mary's Church in Cambridge. The theme of his speech was 'the encouragement and training of

young people in church music' and was a very thought provoking speech. Time was given after the speech for questions and there were many different topics covered which linked with the speech.

Following lunch, there was a composite recital at OLEM. Each of the local associations had been invited to provide someone to play for up to eight minutes. The appreciative audience heard a very interesting programme from composers as varied as J.S.Bach, Guilment and Langlais.

During the lunchbreak and after the recital, there was the opportunity to play three other organs in the area: St Andrew's Street Baptist Church; St. Paul's, Hills Road and the organ in the OLEM Choir Room which had been installed earlier this year although dates from 1973.

Overall it was a very interesting and inspiring day and it was good to hear and meet players from other associations in the region. Details of the next East of England Organ Day will be available in due course.

Tim Patient

CASTAWAYS CHOICES

Over the years the Association has had as an event Desert Island Discs. It was started by former member Ken Smith and the first castaway was Dr Peter Aston. Sadly there is no record of this. In the first Desert Island Discs to be reported on in *The Journal* the castaway was Katherine Dienes who was, at the time Assistant at Norwich Cathedral and the interviewer was Ken Smith.

Ken Smith was an imaginative Events Secretary and introduced several novel ideas during his tenure of that post which, in addition to DID included quizzes, a different form of which still features as our Quiz and Chips event. (Quizzes without chips were quite popular).

However, I digress.

I thought it would be of interest to be reminded of just who our castaways have been over the years and what music they chose to have with them on the island.

With that in mind I thought I'd remind you of Katherine Dienes's choices (1998). Katherine is now,

of course, Katherine Dienes Williams and is currently at the helm at Guildford Cathedral.

Katherine was born in New Zealand and having a father who had been a political prisoner in Hungary was naturally interested in Hungarian music and one of her choices was of Hungarian folksongs by Bela Bartok played on the piano.



Katherine Dienes-Williams
(Photo: Guildford Cathedral)

Her other choices were the fourth movement of *A Final Shaking* by John Adams followed

by *O Crux Splendidior* by Peter Philips sung by the choir of Winchester Cathedral where she had been Organ Scholar. She also sang in this piece at very short notice.

Dreaming of coming to England inspired her to *The Lark Ascending* by Vaughan Williams. Then followed *The Resurrection* from Mahler's second symphony.

Katherine was married in Winchester Cathedral in 1996 and chose *O Sacrum Convivium* by Messiaen which was sung on that occasion.

Her final choices were *The Rose Lake* by Tippett and the third of *The Four Last Songs* by Strauss.

Her book was *The Lord of the Rings* and her luxury a grand piano containing a hammock.

The next vintage castaway - David Dunnett (2000)

Every Journal since then contains the reports of Desert Island Discs with much more detail of the life stories of the castaways and can be pulled up on line.

Ron Watson

A WEEKEND IN PARIS

6th - 9th June 2025

(Part 1)

Paul Fisher is a retired Anglican priest, a fine pianist and organist, and a published and recorded composer too. We first met on the IAO Congress in Paris in 2002 and have maintained contact ever since, occasionally meeting up at various organ events. It was he who mused with me towards the end of last year how good it would be to pay a visit to Paris some time to experience the newly restored splendours of Notre Dame and its unique organ. He it was who subsequently initiated and maintained the impetus to transform wishful thinking into a dream realised. A weekend was selected, Paul booked the hotel rooms, and I secured the Eurostar tickets.

Knowing Paul has various significant contacts in the organ world (he's had regular lessons with Gerard Brooks and Kevin Bowyer, for example), I suggested he might like to

investigate the possibility of trying to arrange a visit to one or other of the notable organ tribunes in the city, preferably one housing a Cavaillé-Coll organ. But of course! He duly contacted Gerard and couple of weeks before our departure a Facebook message from Paul revealed organ loft visits had been secured with Éric Lebrun at St-Antoine-des-Quinze-Vingts and Sophie Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin at St-Sulpice. EXCITED!

And so it was that on Friday 6th June Paul and I departed for Paris on the 12.37 Eurostar train from St. Pancras International despite the best efforts of a failed freight train between Norwich and Diss to prevent me from checking in on time and necessitating a lengthy diversion via Cambridge. STRESS!

Thankfully all proceeded well after that, our rooms in the Ibis Budget Hotel at the Porte de Montreuil proving perfectly adequate and spotlessly clean. Saturday 7th dawned on the grey side, the sun putting in occasional appearances as the

day progressed, but temperatures were comfortable and mercifully some way below the 'heat dome' hell that afflicted the city just a couple of weeks later! PHEW!

Notre Dame was our first main port of call. Quite by chance a friend I'd been sitting next to at my church the previous Sunday had revealed he and his wife were visiting Paris this same weekend. Hearing I was intending to visit Notre Dame he enlightened me to the fact you could book online, free of charge, a time slot to gain entrance thus avoiding the excessively long queue of tourists that would inevitably greet our arrival at the cathedral doors. Notre Dame has always been a prime destination for visitors to Paris; even more so since the restoration! He told me tickets would become available two days before my intended visit. Assuming the time slots would be released on the stroke of midnight in Paris I was ready and waiting by my computer at 11pm on the Wednesday evening before our departure. Bingo! Every time slot was fully



The luminous interior of the recently restored Notre Dame in Paris following the calamitous fire of 2019.
(Photo: Martin Cottam)

available and I made my choice. Just twenty minutes later only lunchtime slots were still there to be had. By 5.30am next morning every slot had been fully booked! If you're intending to visit Notre Dame I'd thoroughly recommend following this procedure (via the cathedral's own website). On arrival at Notre Dame Paul and I found the queue of those who'd not booked a time slot for entry to be seemingly without end and decidedly slow moving!

When President Macron declared in the wake of the calamitous fire of 2019 that Notre Dame would be restored and open again just five years later most thought him deluded or, at best, over optimistic. But the French have a track record when it comes to completing major infrastructure projects that puts our own efforts to shame (think High Speed Rail projects, for example!). Where there's a will there's a way and to enter Notre Dame now is to be confronted with what is nothing short of a miracle; a "resurrection" indeed, as my friend Paul declared it to be.

Everything has been meticulously restored and cleaned down to the last detail: stonework, decoration, stained glass, statues... and, of course, the irreplaceable Clicquot/Cavaillé-Coll behemoth of an organ (V/P 113) high in its west gallery with its batteries of later chamades. Looking up into the cathedral's central crossing that six years earlier had been a gaping hole and a tangle of twisted scaffolding following the collapse of the flaming flèche it was hard to believe such a catastrophe had taken place, let alone so recently. The replacement vaults are immaculate, the joins between old and new stonework invisible.

Towards the end of our visit we got talking to a very friendly and helpful woman volunteering at the information desk. She told us she lived nearby and on emerging from her home on that fateful April day in 2019 she'd seen a small plume of smoke rising on the far side of the cathedral. She simply assumed someone must be doing some filming or something. But the smoke began to increase



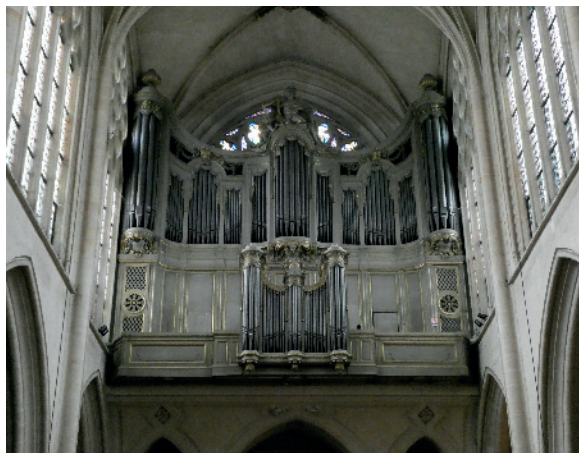
The restored Grand Organ of Notre Dame (Photo: Martin Cottam)

dramatically and before long she, and the weeping crowds now gathered around her, looked on in horror and disbelief as the towering flèche took light and then toppled into the now blazing building. Imagine being on hand to see the spire of Norwich Cathedral collapsing and crashing to the ground as flames engulfed the nave and choir roofs! Too awful to contemplate! But here we were; aside from some remaining areas

of scaffolding on parts of the exterior and around the base of the flèche Notre Dame is looking as pristine as it can have done for centuries.

Following an excellent, unhurried lunch in the nearby Latin Quarter (€20 for three courses? That'll do nicely!), Paul and I strolled through the afternoon till our 5pm appointment at St-Antoine, popping into the church of St-Germain l'Auxerrois at one point where we saw the organ

Alexandre Boëly presided over between 1840 and 1851 until he was sacked for playing music (notably Bach) the congregation complained was too serious!



Boëly's organ in St-Germain-l'Auxerrois
(Photo: Martin Cottam)

St-Antoine-des-Quinze-Vingts is situated just behind the Opéra de Paris Bastille and we could hear Bach's great g minor Fantasia (BWV 542) being played on the organ over the west door as we entered (see rear cover). It soon became evident this could not be Éric Lebrun playing but more likely a student, as was confirmed when, having spotted us from the tribune, Éric himself came down to meet us. He was under the impression we were coming at 5.30pm and until then

was engaged in giving a lesson to the young man we'd heard playing. No matter! Éric, titulaire at St-Antoine since 1990, is as

charming and engaging a gentleman as you could wish to meet and we soon found ourselves in the organ loft invited to observe and listen until lesson end.

Student departed, Éric gave us a quick résumé of the organ's history. It was originally built by Cavaillé-Coll in 1894 as a 3 manual organ of forty stops for a vast house newly purchased by the

eccentric, fabulously wealthy, Wagner-loving Baron Albert de l'Espée on the avenue du Bois de Boulogne (the present day avenue Foch). When the Baron's neighbours grew tired of his late night musical declamations he decided to sell the organ. It was purchased by one Count Bertier de Sauvigny who donated it to the recently constructed church of St-Antoine where it was installed in 1909 by Merklin and enlarged by them thanks to funding by the parish priest!

Among the new additions were a 32' Bourdon, Bombarde 16', and Trompette 8' on the Pédale, a Bombarde 16' and a Nasard on the Grand Orgue, and Fourniture III and Basson 16' on the Récit expressif. A Clairon 4' was added later to the Pédale, the Grand Orgue Nasard replaced by a Doublette 2', and the Carillon III on the Positif expressif divided to form a Nasard, a Tierce, and a Piccolo 1'. The present organ now has 3 manuals and forty seven stops.

Éric demonstrated the original Cavaillé-Coll tutti by playing the opening chords of the first movement of Widor's 6th organ symphony. Wow! As ever with Cavaillé-Coll the sheer éclat of the reeds is something else! Adding the Merklin stops Éric then played the same chords revealing a tutti now possessed of a greater gravitas. Truly magnificent! He briefly demonstrated some of the quieter stops and the Récit Basson-Hautbois 8'; it's quite a delicate stop but when added to the Fonds across the organ that archetypal Franck sonority is secured, as revealed when Éric

played the first few measures of the E major Choral No.1. Lush and gorgeous.

His short demonstration completed Éric enthusiastically invited us to take a turn for ourselves, an invitation we did not hesitate to accept! Both Paul and I chose to play quiet pieces, Paul one of his own compositions and one by Nigel Allcoat. For my part I eased myself in with the manuals only 'Rapsodie Sacrée' by Charles Tournemire followed by the 'Communion' from Louis Vierne's 'Triptyque' (Op. 58). I was intrigued by Éric's suggestion I play the Récit part on the Positif but there was good reasoning behind his advice. On this organ the Positif is also under expression and, like the Grand Orgue, the action is aided by Barker Lever whilst the Récit is tracker necessitating a heavier touch. The last page of 'Communion' requires the addition of the Voix Céleste to the Récit registration. Eric thought the Unda Maris on the Positif might provide a more satisfying timbre for the conclusion of this piece. Having

followed his instruction I would not disagree.

Our thoroughly enjoyable session in the organ loft was brought to a delightful conclusion by the arrival of another of Éric's students, a young woman from South Korea. Éric suggested she play the 'Cantilène' from Widor's 10th Organ Symphony, a rare opportunity in Widor's output to give the Clarinette stop a significant airing. She acquitted herself well and with her permission I was able to film her performance, emailing her a copy on my return to Norwich for which she expressed effusive gratitude. Éric insisted Paul and I each write an entry in his organ tribune visitors book before we made our farewells and returned to the nave. I can't help but wonder which eminent players have previously left their mark in that book, alongside whom I definitely feel something of a fraud!

We decided to stay on for the 6.30pm Mass which gave us chance to hear Éric provide sensitive organ accompaniment

for another young woman who led the singing from the chancel with confidence and a pleasing, clear voice. He improvised too, with delicacy, and during the communion played the first three variations from Duruflé's 'Choral Varié sur le Veni Creator'; a wholly appropriate choice, it being the weekend of Pentecost. My hope that he might play the final variation for his 'sortie' was wonderfully fulfilled. Utterly glorious! Éric's playing is characterised by an effortless fluidity and grace; coupled with his innate musicality and Duruflé's compositional mastery the build up to the full Cavaillé-Coll/Merklin *tutti* was truly exhilarating. Paul and I departed with feelings of great satisfaction as we sought out somewhere suitable for our evening meal. But I, for one, was left with a tremendous hunger to return to St-Antoine some day soon, maybe even for a one-off lesson with Éric. There's no harm in dreaming!

To be continued....

Martin J. Cottam

FOUR BANQUETS, A WEDDING - AND AN ORGAN

Earlier this year we received an invitation to attend the marriage of my wife's nephew in Moldova. After some research into travel options (train via Ukraine probably not really feasible) we decided to take a direct flight to the capital Chisinau from Luton. After all, when were we ever going to Moldova otherwise. The invitation indicated that the celebrations would take place over four days ending with an Eastern Orthodox marriage. So we had some expectation that some serious partying was in the offing. What I didn't expect to find was a rather splendid concert organ in a country where the population is predominantly Eastern Orthodox - a denomination which does not include instrumental music in its liturgy.

On our first day looking around the centre of Chisinau we came across a striking building near to the main government offices which we later learned had originally been built as a bank. The sign at the entrance was

immediately interpretable because Roumanian is close enough to French, at least visually if not audibly, to indicate that 'Sala cu Orga' meant 'organ hall'. The hall however was closed due to a series of national celebrations (Independence Day and Language Day) and it wasn't until the fifth day of our visit that we found the hall open.



The Organ Hall in Chisinau, Moldova
Photo: Wikimedia Commons

We paid a nominal fee to have a look around and found that there was a rehearsal going on in the main concert hall (hence the figures on stage of the cover photo). Naturally we couldn't disturb the rehearsal so had to be

content with taking a few photos of the impressive interior and the organ.

Subsequent research showed the organ to have been installed in 1978 by the Czech firm of Rieger-Kloss. The IIIP 55-stop organ is typical of their output. It is quite difficult to get any details of the Chisinau organ as the Rieger-Kloss company ceased trading in 2022 and a very limited legacy website doesn't give any information on this organ.

However, the first organist of the Chisinau organ was Svetlana Bodiul, daughter of Ivan Bodiul, a senior politician of the Moldovan SSR during the Soviet era. There is an interesting YouTube clip of Svetlana Bodiul playing music of Nicolas de Grigny on the Chisinau

organ
(<https://tinyurl.com/yfawt3da>)

Our attendance at the Eastern Orthodox wedding ceremony did give us the opportunity to experience the vocal music. The entire wedding service was sung by a young priest with beautifully sung responses come from a small choir high above the main door. As a concession to the Dutch-Moldovan alliance of the marriage couple the service ended with the father of the officiating priest, himself a priest, leading the congregation in a Roumanian version of a Dutch congratulatory song with a richly operatic baritone voice. A wonderful experience!

David Shuker

'THE ONE MAN BAND'

A TALK BY PHILIP NORMAN

Saturday, 13 September 2025

Breaking with tradition we began the afternoon with tea, coffee and cakes. The reason for this departure from the usual custom was the despite leaving their home near Abergavenny at

7.40am, Philip Norman and his wife were blighted by roadworks and two accidents, including one on the Hethersett bypass which unfortunately resulted in them arriving late. Good things come to those who wait, and those of us present at Philip's talk several years ago on Bach and Handel knew it would be worth the wait.

This year Philip presented us with an extended version of a talk he originally gave at the Bloomsbury organ day entitled 'The one man band' The talk was in two sections, the first looking at the history of the organ. The second, focusing on music.

The development of the mechanics of the organ started in medieval times when organs had huge levers for keys, and no way of differentiating the sounds, so they were inflexible and just made a huge noise! To get more variety of sound more manuals were later added and also small pedal boards. These pedal boards were just used to play the *cantus firmus* in long notes.

Philip showed us how this practice had come from vocal music of the time where the *cantus firmus* was sung in the lowest part with more florid movement above it.

Skiping forward to the restoration period were heard an extract from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* which featured echo effects. English organs of the time were fitted with an echo manual. The pipes of which were in a box (with no shutters) and

the keyboards compass did not include the bass or tenor registers. This later developed into the swell organ. The first one being at St Magnus the Martyr in London, dating from 1712. Later trigger, and later still balanced swell pedals were introduced the enable more control of the enclosed division.

In 1661 the organ of St Georges Chapel, Windsor had a shifting movement which allowed greater control of the sounds of the organ This was followed by combination pedals, in which stops selected by the builder would be drawn with each pedal. This then led to combination pistons and their French equivalent, ventil pedals. We heard an extract from Cesar Franck's *Grand Piece Symphonique* which had a diminuendo by the swell pedal, followed by ventils bringing on reeds of different divisions whilst holding long chords (quite an effective sound)

Then in England we had the general crescendo pedal and in Germany the rollschweller, both of which allowed crescendos and diminuendos to be made easily.

We looked at a chorale prelude by Reger with a pedal line that could be played by one foot, while the other operated the rollschweller and makes the dynamic markings in the music easy to realise. Though both these devices have their problems; it can encourage 'lazy' registration and there is the danger of the player forgetting that they are in use. Philip recalled a famous female organist some years ago who played during a televised concert, a piece of Messiaen using the crescendo pedal. Then went to play a delicate, quiet encore, only to forget the crescendo pedal was still set at full organ!

We then moved to part two of the talk, looking at the music. Early organ music was inspired by vocal music. It was often simply vocal music with added ornaments and elaborations. An example of this from the Buxheimer orgelbuch was shown. French vocal chansons featured repeated notes as their themes. Italian organ canzonas often feature repeated notes, this tradition has then spread to

German fugues by Buxtehude and Bach (the Fugue in G BWV 541 for example) Some organ music was clearly written to fit under the hands. However, much of it is clearly string influenced. The *Fantasia in G minor* BWV 542 being one such example. Philip then showed us the score of the ubiquitous Air from Orchestral suite in D or 'Air on a G string'. In which we have a solo cantabile line on the top, accompaniment in the middle and at striding cello line in the bass. Compare this to the Adagio (from *Toccata, Adagio and Fugue* in C, BWV 564) The *Toccata and Fugue* in D minor attributed to J.S Bach is thought by some to be a string composition with a repeated note on the A string and other notes played on the D and G strings. We heard it twice, first, in the familiar organ version, then in a transcription from the twentieth century for solo violin. The trumpets in Baroque times did not have valves and music written for these instruments generally stuck to notes from the harmonic series. We looked at a Stanley *Trumpet voluntary* for organ which only used

notes from the harmonic series for the solo trumpet line. There was no need for Stanley to do this as he was writing for organ and was not limited to these notes, but he did this because he wanted to imitate the trumpet.

Skipping forwards to Schubert and his 8th Symphony. There is much use of repeated notes to give a 'throbbing' effect. Organ music from this time and later often featured repeated chords. An example being in Elgar's organ sonata (1st Movement) where repeated chords are used in the left hand to keep the rhythm going.

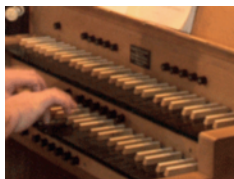
In the nineteenth century orchestral music used many colourful solo timbres. Organists of the time demanded these colours on the organ, whereas in before the oboe and trumpet had sufficed. By the end of the nineteenth century organ music looked more like orchestral reductions. Continuing this idea we looked at Dvorak's 9th Symphony where a solo line was shared by various instruments rather than be played by just one, compare this to the Toccata from Whitlock's *Plymouth suite*

where again a solo line is played by more than one register. The second movement of Dvorak's 9th begins with some transitional chords to get us from E minor (the key of the first movement) into D flat for the second. The third moment of Elgar's organ sonata also features these transitional chords taking us from G minor (of the second movement) into B flat. Philip also mentions the cyclical feature of symphonies (such as Dvorak's 9th) where the movements are thematically related had also found its way into organ compositions.

He ended his talk by suggesting that perhaps the ultimate in flexibility was the cinema organ.

Philip was thanked by myself and everyone present for a most informative talk revealing how much organ music (even original compositions for the instrument) had been influenced by vocal, string and later orchestral music. Good things do come to those who wait!

Matthew Bond



Norfolk Organists' Association

The art of music as related to the organ



Events

Wednesday 26th November 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

Choral Evensong at Norwich Cathedral

Once again there will be the opportunity for members to play the Cathedral organ after the service, courtesy of Ashley Grote, Master of Music.

Saturday 10th January 2026 at 7 p.m. - Quiz and Chips

St Cuthbert's Church Hall, Wroxham Road, Sprowston, Norwich, NR7 8TZ.

Fish 'n' Chips followed by a quiz on general knowledge and music hosted by Chris Marshall.

Bring your own drinks, cutlery and condiments.

