



**AND**



**PRESENT:**

# **THE PENGE FESTIVAL ORGAN RECITAL 2024**

**GIVEN BY MEMBERS OF  
THE SOUTHWARK & SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF ORGANISTS**

**AT**

**PENGE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

**SATURDAY 15th JUNE 2024, 1pm**

**Admission free, donations welcome towards the upkeep of the  
organ**

**Refreshments are served at the back of church from 12.30  
and after the recital**

## PROGRAMME

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847): Sonata No.4 in B flat, 1st Movement  
played by Bridget West

Christopher Maxim (born 1971): Chorale Prelude 'Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig' (or 'O Jesu, du edle Gabe')  
played by Bridget West

George Thalben-Ball (1896-1987): Elegy  
played by Mark Baker

Philip Moore (born 1943): Paeon  
played by Mark Baker

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750): Prelude and Fugue in B minor, BWV 544  
played by Alan Langridge

Louis Vierne (1870-1937): Berceuse  
played by Malcolm Aldridge

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750): Chorale Prelude 'In dir ist Freude', BWV 615  
played by Mark Baker

Georg Böhm (1661-1733): Praeludium in C  
played by Alan Langridge

## Refreshments are served at the back of church

**Thank you** to the Deacons of Penge Congregational Church for allowing us to present today's organ recital.

**Donations** are invited towards the upkeep of the wonderful 1915 Penge Lewis organ. The costs of keeping this instrument in excellent playing condition are considerable. Penge Congregational Church does not receive any Government grants or external funding for this purpose. There are orange donation buckets and bowls and also two contactless card readers at the back of church. Thank you for your generosity.

## PROGRAMME NOTES

### **Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847): Sonata No.4 in B flat, 1st Movement**

This movement feels like something of a prelude. It opens with semiquaver arpeggios and scales, before moving into a more stately section that uses a dotted rhythm. The two motifs combine, and the movement ends with the semiquaver movements. This and the last movement of the same sonata are said to have been written as technical studies.

### **Christopher Maxim (born 1971): Chorale Prelude 'Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig' (or 'O Jesu, du edle Gabe')**

*Hail, kind Jesus,  
gentle beyond all measure.  
Ah, how are you so broken  
and your whole body torn?  
Let me inherit your love  
and die blessed within it.*

Just before Easter, Christopher Maxim was commissioned by William Whitehead to compose a chorale prelude for the Orgelbüchlein Project, to be one of the 118 missing pieces in J S Bach's Orgelbüchlein (Little Organ Book). The composer wrote two settings, of which this is the first. It is very nearly a pastiche of Bach, styled on *Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ* in the Orgelbüchlein - the chorale melody in the right hand, accompanied by flowing semiquavers in the left, and pulsating quavers in the pedals. The chorale itself is played before the prelude.

### **George Thalben-Ball (1896-1987): Elegy**

Sir George Thalben-Ball CBE was an Australian organist and composer who spent almost all his life in England. He composed several anthems and organ works, of which the best known is his meditative Elegy for organ, which was played, for example, at the Funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales.

This piece originated in an improvisation which Thalben-Ball played at the end of a live BBC daily religious service during World War II, when the service finished a couple of minutes earlier than expected. So many listeners to the broadcast telephoned the BBC to ask what the composition was, that he decided to write down his improvisation as well as he could remember it.

### **Philip Moore (born 1943): Paean**

Philip Moore is an English composer and organist. He was Assistant Music Master and Organist at Eton College for three years before becoming Assistant Organist at Canterbury Cathedral in 1968. He was appointed Organist and Master of the Choristers at Guildford Cathedral in 1974 and succeeded Francis Jackson in 1983 as Organist and Master of the Music at York Minster, a post he held until his retirement in 2008.

Paean is a cheerful piece and appears in the Organists' Charitable Trust Little Organ Book. As ever with one of the UK's finest composers of traditional modern organ music, the work is literate, idiomatic, pleasing to the ear, and full of colour and character.

### **Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750): Prelude and Fugue in B minor, BWV 544**

The Prelude and Fugue in B minor is a unique and important composition amongst Bach's later organ works and in his mature style. It was probably composed sometime between 1725 and 1737 in Leipzig where Bach spent the final 27 years of his life as Cantor (Director of Music) appointed by the City Council and in charge of the music at St Thomas' Church and three other nearby churches.

The prelude is unusually in 6/8 time. It has a complex ritornello form consisting of a recurring idea, underpinned by pedal octaves, swirling demisemiquaver scales, syncopations and suspensions.

The fugue is in 4/4 time and starts with a straightforward subject which is essentially an ascending and descending B minor scale. Yet Bach investigates through harmony and counterpoint every possibility of this simple scale. Towards the end, the pedal returns, new ideas are introduced, and the music builds to a powerful conclusion.

Unusually for Bach's organ works, the autograph of this piece in Bach's own hand still exists. To see the first page of the autograph, please scan this QR code:



or follow this link:

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prelude\\_and\\_Fugue\\_in\\_B\\_minor,\\_BWV\\_544#/media/File:BWV544.jpg](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prelude_and_Fugue_in_B_minor,_BWV_544#/media/File:BWV544.jpg)

### **Louis Vierne (1870-1937): Berceuse**

Louis Vierne was almost completely blind from birth, and initially learned the piano by listening to others playing. At age six he underwent eye surgery after which he could just distinguish broad shapes and sometimes people's faces and read very large lettering. His mother transcribed music onto very large staves to assist his learning. Despite the obstacles of birth, he so impressed his teachers at the French national institute for the blind that they

arranged an introduction to César Franck, with whom he studied harmony, and later Charles-Marie Widor..

In 1900, Vierne won the competition for the post of titular organist (chief organist) at Notre Dame de Paris – perhaps the most important such role in the whole of France – a position which he held until his death. He loved this organ dearly and, in fulfilment of a hope which he had expressed earlier, he actually died at the organ bench, during his 1,750<sup>th</sup> recital in the Cathedral. Another important organist and composer, Maurice Durufle, was at his side as page turner and registrant.

The "Berceuse sur les paroles classiques" is the 19<sup>th</sup> of Vierne's 24 "Pieces en style libre". It was composed shortly before the outbreak of the first world war, during which both his younger brother René (also an organist of distinction) and his son Jacques died. The melody for the Berceuse is based on an old French lullaby "dodo enfant do" (sleep child, sleep).

### **Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750): Chorale Prelude 'In dir ist Freude', BWV 615**

Johann Sebastian Bach was a German composer and musician of the late Baroque period. He is known for his orchestral music such as the Brandenburg Concertos; solo instrumental works such as the cello suites and the sonatas and partitas for solo violin; keyboard works such as the Goldberg Variations and The Well-Tempered Clavier; organ works such as the Schübler Chorales and the Toccata and Fugue in D minor; and choral works such as the St Matthew Passion and the Mass in B minor. Since the 19th-century Bach Revival, he has been generally regarded as one of the greatest composers in the history of Western music. Bach composed this festive organ chorale prelude, BWV 615, as part of his *Orgelbüchlein* dating from his period at Weimar. The complete cantus firmus is gradually heard in canon, over a carillon-like ostinato pedal. Traditionally, this festive prelude is played on New Year's Day.

### **Georg Böhm (1661-1733): Praeludium in C**

Georg Böhm was born in 1661 in the village of Hohenkirchen in the Thuringia region of Germany. He attended the University of Jena in 1684 and by 1693 had moved to Hamburg. In 1698 Böhm became the principal organist at St John's Church in Lüneberg, which is where he stayed for the rest of his life.

Böhm may have been Johann Sebastian Bach's teacher. There is an intriguing mention in 1775 in a letter by Carl Philip Emanuel Bach (one of Johann Sebastian's sons) that Böhm was his father's teacher, but it was then crossed out. We know that the two composers were good friends, and Bach was influenced by Böhm's music, notably the chorale partita style that Böhm made popular.

It is a wonder that today we have any of Böhm's music. There is no autograph (music in the composer's own hand) of the Praeludium in C. It is likely that Böhm originally wrote the piece in tablature (a system of musical shorthand) but there is now no evidence of this. The tablature would have been transcribed to provide copies of the piece that organists could

play from. Unfortunately it is inevitable that the copyists would have made errors (tablature is difficult to transcribe accurately) or, astonishingly, the copyists (possibly students of Böhm) may have decided to 'correct' or 'improve' what Böhm had written. We know that several copies of the music existed (all with different variants) but they were destroyed in the second world war. The music we have today has been painstakingly reconstructed from accumulated knowledge of the contents of the copies plus black-and-white photos of some pages of the copies taken in the 1930s by Karl Matthaei, organist of the Stadtkirche in Winterthur.

But when it comes to performance, the written music will only take you so far and the player has decisions to make. Should the written music be treated as sacrosanct and therefore played exactly as printed? Do we have any clues as to how the music might have been played in the 17th/18th century? (answer: yes, we have the organ playing tradition from the North German region which has been passed down from teacher to pupil over hundreds of years.) And what about the differences in the copies? For example, there are at least two versions of the famous pedal solo at the beginning. And what about decisions about dynamics (loud, quiet, in between) - there are none written. And ornamentation (musical decorations) - also none written. These are all decisions that the player has to make.

So what will you hear? The playing tradition requires a much freer style of playing compared to Bach. Speeding up, slowing down, added notes and improvisation are all permitted - and even expected. You will hear all of these in this performance today.

The most important thing is that the player is charged with making this music live again. It should have the feeling of spontaneity and a sense of fun.

Praeludia (preludes) of this time consist of contrasting sections. The opening begins with a written chord of C major - which Alan will improvise as a musical flourish. Then comes the big pedal solo (just the feet, no hands) - but does a big pedal solo have to be loud - or played all loud? After the pedal solo, there are a series of rapid arpeggios leading to a sequence of musical ideas. This leads into a joyful fugue. At the end there is a coda, most of which was probably by Böhm. And at the very end, Alan will improvise to give the piece a spectacular finish.

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Bridget West**



Bridget West took up the organ at Christ's Hospital, Horsham, before continuing her music studies at the University of Bristol. Since then, she has played at churches in north and south London, including eight years as the Assistant at St John's, Upper Norwood. Bridget works at the Church Times, edits the alumnus magazine for Christ's Hospital, and was the festival co-ordinator of the Croydon Performing Arts Festival for several years. She serves on the committee of the Southwark and South London Organists' Association, and is a member of the Society of Women Organists, including its adjustable-benches-campaign working party. Recitals include St John's, Upper Norwood; Christ's Chapel, Dulwich; All Saints', Warlingham; and St John's, East Dulwich.

### **Mark Baker**

Mark Baker was born in Beckenham in 2007. He is the organist at St Mark's RC Church, West Wickham and an Organ Scholar at St Mary's Church, Beddington. Mark's principal organ tutors are David Moore and John Webber.

Mark won the St Mary's RC Primary School Music Prize in 2018 and the Half-Colours Prize for his contribution to Music at The London Oratory School in 2022. He is currently studying Music at A-Level at Langley Park School for Boys as well as preparing for the Grade 7 Associated Board organ exam later this year.

Mark is a keen musician, having achieved Grade 5 in 4 instruments (piano, violin, saxophone, organ) as well as Music Theory. He also sings (bass) in several ensembles/choirs.

Mark is a student member of the Southwark and South London Society of Organists (SSLSO), the Bromley and Croydon Organists Association (BCOA), and the Royal College of Organists.

## Alan Langridge



Alan Langridge is a freelance organist and choir director, playing the organ and directing choirs for Sunday church services, funerals, weddings, and other celebrations. He read music at the University of Leeds where he studied organ and harpsichord with Peter Seymour and performance studies with Graham Barber. Later organ teachers include Anne Marsden Thomas, Marilyn Harper and Peter Westerbrink. Alan holds the Associate diploma of the Royal College of Organists. He learned the piano from the age of 12, and later taught himself to play the organ when his local church needed an organist. He obtained his first Organist and Director of Music post at St Luke's, Woodside, South Norwood at the age of 16. During his time in Leeds he was Organist and Director of Music at three churches: St Augustine's, Wrangthorn; St Mark's, Woodhouse; and All Hallows', Hyde Park. Later he was occasional organist at St Chad's, South Norwood and occasional organist and choir director at St Mark's, South Norwood. Away from the organ bench, Alan studied for the public sector chartered accountancy qualification, eventually becoming Assistant Director of Finance for a large London authority. He retired a few years ago.

## Malcolm Aldridge



Malcolm Aldridge has just passed his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. He began playing whilst still at school, more than half a century ago, but after taking a degree in musicology he then spent his entire working life in university administration. On his retirement he took up organ playing again and now holds the post of organist at St Andrew's, Leytonstone.



# SPECIFICATION OF THE ORGAN AT PENGE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## Builders

1915 T C Lewis & Company  
 1984/5 Rebuild by Brian H Bunting, Epping, Essex  
 1986 Unknown builder - Cornet replaced and Open Diapason No.1

**Case** P Morley Horder FRIBA

**Position:** Divided, each side of chancel

<b>Pedal</b>	1	Great Bass	16'
	2	Sub Bass	16'
	3	Lieblich Bourdon	16'
	4	Principal	8'
	5	Flute Bass	8'
	6	Fifteenth	4'
	7	Flute	4'
	8	Trombone	16'
	9	Trumpet	8'
<b>Choir</b>	10	Lieblich Gedact	8'
	11	Principal	4'
	12	Stopped Flute	4'
	13	Piccolo	2'
	14	Larigot	1 1/3'
	15	Clarinet	8'
	16	Tremulant	
	17	Trumpet	8'
	18	Clarion	4'
<b>Great</b>	19	Open Diapason	8'
	20	Stopped Diapason	8'
	21	Octave	4'
	22	Flûte Harmonique	4'
	23	Super Octave	2'
	24	Mixture	III

	25	Cornet	II
	26	Trumpet	8'
<b>Swell</b>	27	Lieblich Bourdon	16'
	28	Geigen Principal	8'
	29	Rohr Flute	8'
	30	Viole da Gamba	8'
	31	Voix Célestes	8'
	32	Geigen Principal	4'
	33	Fifteenth	2'
	34	Mixture	III
	35	Contra Oboe	16'
	36	Horn	8'
	37	Tremulant	

### **Console**

Console type: Detached

Pedalboard: Radiating concave

Stop type: Drawstop

Angled Jambs

Label font: Sans Serif Caps

'Lewis' drawstop knobs

### **Couplers**

Swell to Pedal

Swell octave

Choir to Great

Great to Choir

Swell to Great

Swell suboctave

Choir to Pedal

Swell to Choir

Swell unison off

Great to Pedal

### **Blower** Electric

### **Accessories**

Balanced Swell Pedal

5 + 5 toe pistons

Great to Pedal toe piston

Great and Pedal pistons combined drawstop

5 Thumb pistons per manual

5 Reversible Thumb pistons to couplers

One additional Swell thumb piston which produces 8' Oboe by drawing 16' Contra Oboe with Octave and Unison Off

Ventil to Trumpet

Piston setter board with 186 switches

For further details of this organ, please see the National Pipe Organ Register website:  
[npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=P00484](http://npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=P00484)

**Penge Music** presents monthly music events at Penge Congregational Church. The next ones are:-

**Open Mondays** - Monday 17th June. Every third Monday, doors open 7pm (for warm up), 7.30pm start. Come and listen, or book a slot to play or sing - informal, relaxed, supportive. The Penge organ is always popular and makes an appearance each month. Bring your own bottle (alcohol permitted) and nibbles. Admission £5 for performers and audience, cash or card on the door, Under 16s free. To book a performing place please email Jess Blake: [pengeopenmondays@gmail.com](mailto:pengeopenmondays@gmail.com)

**Lunchtime Concerts** - Saturday 20th July - **Echo Zou, piano**. Our lunchtime concerts are every third Saturday, 1pm. Admission £5, cash or card on the door, Under 16s free. For more details and to receive regular Penge Music mailings, please email Vicky Rockport: [pengelunchtimeconcerts@gmail.com](mailto:pengelunchtimeconcerts@gmail.com)

Find us at [pengemusic.co.uk](http://pengemusic.co.uk)

**Southwark & South London Society of Organists (SSLSO)** has a full and varied programme of events and you don't have to be an organist to join the society. For further details and how to join, please speak to any of our players or see our website: [sslso.org.uk](http://sslso.org.uk)