Elgar
Enigma Variations · Organ Sonata
KEITH JOHN
Organ of The Temple Church, London
Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Organ Sonata in G major Op 28

1. Allegro maestoso [9'52]
2. Allegretto [5'41]
3. Andante espressivo [7'00]
4. Presto (comodo) [7'07]

‘Enigma’ Variations Op 36

5. Enigma Andante [1'38]
6. Variation 1 C.A.E. (L’istesso Tempo) [2'10]
7. Variation 2 H.D.S-P. (Allegro) [0'55]
8. Variation 3 R.B.T. (Allegretto) [1'34]
9. Variation 4 W.M.B. (Allegro di molto) [0'36]
10. Variation 5 R.P.A. (Moderato) [3'32]
11. Variation 6 Ysobel (Andantino) [1'34]
12. Variation 7 Troyte (Presto) [1'08]
13. Variation 8 W.N. (Allegretto) [2'22]
14. Variation 9 Nimrod (Adagio) [4'16]
15. Variation 10 Dorabella (Intermezzo: Allegretto) [2'52]
16. Variation 11 G.R.S. (Allegro di molto) [1'07]
17. Variation 12 B.G.N. (Andante) [3'03]
18. Variation 13 *** (Romanza: Moderato) [3'10]

KEITH JOHN
Organ of The Temple Church, London
ELGAR’S Organ Sonata, Op 28, was the outcome of a request from Hugh Blair, organist of Worcester Cathedral, for a new piece to be played on July 8th 1895 when a group of American organists would be visiting the cathedral. As soon as Elgar had sent off the final number of Op 27 (Scenes from the Bavarian Highlands) to Novello on April 10th, he turned his attention to the sonata, sketching out the second movement that same day. However, on June 22nd, Hugh Blair visited the Elgars to find a work still very much in progress and it was only a concentrated week of effort which saw the work completed, albeit still in a fairly rough state with alterations and corrections. The score was finally handed over to Blair at luncheon on July 3rd, leaving the unfortunate man just a few days to prepare it for the first performance. Elgar, somewhat misleadingly, had written on the manuscript: ‘Friday June 28, 9 pm. Finished the Sonata July 3, 1pm (one week’s work)’.

Hugh Blair duly gave the first performance, and Rosa Burley, headmistress of The Mount School in Malvern where Elgar taught violin, described it as follows: ‘His performance of the Sonata showed that he had either not learned it or else had celebrated the event unwisely, for he made a terrible mess of poor Elgar’s work. I was present at this débacle and commiserated with the Genius. But with a splendid flash of loyalty he refused to blame the murderer who, he said, had not had time thoroughly to study the victim’. Despite this, the Organ Sonata was something of a landmark, representing Elgar’s most substantial work of a symphonic nature to date. Indeed, it has been referred to as ‘Symphony No 0’ following the fine orchestration by Gordon Jacob premiered on June 4th 1947 on the BBC Home Service. This was the result of a commission by the publishers, British & Continental Music Agencies, who had acquired the copyright in 1941 from Breitkopf und Härtel of Leipzig; Novello, in the first instance, refused to publish it complete fearing its difficulty would deter potential buyers.

The dedicatee was not Hugh Blair but Dr Charles Swinnerton Heap, who was a great supporter and advocate of Elgar’s work as well as being a brilliant pianist and organist, composer and conductor. He successfully pleaded Elgar’s case at a meeting of the North Staffordshire Festival Committee when he proposed King Olaf for the forthcoming season. In response to their objection that Elgar was unknown to them whereas Edvard Grieg had already written something on this subject, Heap replied: “Yes, but the composer who in years to come will stand head and shoulders above Grieg is Edward Elgar”. There is sadly no record of his observations on the sonata which might have given us further insight into the work.
Elgar made a tonal plan for the sonata: (1) Allegro G major; (2) Intermezzo in G minor; (3) Adagio B (flat); (4) Finale G minor and major. This was a revision of his first thoughts which reversed the order of the second and third movements: the version we know allows the Adagio to follow straight on from the Intermezzo and helps to emphasize the major/minor contrasts. The first movement, in sonata form, opens with music which is undoubtedly ‘nobilmente’ Elgar: it is powerful with a broad sweep and is clearly another thought on the opening music of *The Black Knight*. Both are in triple time and in G major, ‘Allegro maestoso’, with more-or-less identical rhythmic features. A transitory theme of less intensity heard above gently chugging repeated chords brings calm and the introduction of the second subject group in an easy flowing 9/8 time. The development section shows Elgar’s love of counterpoint (he is reported to have played something from ‘The 48’ every day) and demonstrates his skill in canonic writing as well as seamless combination of themes.

The second movement, Intermezzo, was the first part of the sonata to be written and was completed in a day. It is quite likely a reworking of an already existing piece, for a number of reasons: (1) Elgar’s notes state that the organ sonata Intermezzo was ‘Kopied’ on April 10th 1895; (2) the right-hand figuration is unusually awkward for a keyboard player; (3) the left-hand melody is perfectly in range and eminently suitable for a cello; (4) the staccato pedal part could easily be played by pizzicato doublebasses; (5) in the lighter middle section, again the left-hand melody is not the most comfortable for a keyboard player whilst fairly idiomatic for a cello – the sketches show attempts to improve this situation. This gentle movement is a fairly straightforward ternary structure with the preparation for the return to the opening music of interest. The sketches show various thoughts on the matter which did not necessarily produce the most satisfactory harmonic result in the penultimate bar. The C sharp at the bass of the harmony on the last quaver of the bar is a repeat of that on the second quaver and, as a result, is considerably weakened. C natural is preferable: it follows and harmonizes with the ‘alto’ voice and is a solution favoured by Herbert Sumsion (of whom Elgar famously said after “John’s” first Three Choirs Festival at Gloucester in 1928: “What at the beginning of the week was assumption has now become a certainty”). It is also adopted on this recording.

The highly expressive third movement follows on almost immediately with just a simple three-chord progression easing us into B flat major and the announcement of a broad, expansive melody which again has its origins in cello music. The hushed ‘tranquillo’ section which is
reached by means of a delicate enharmonic move into F sharp major is beautifully crafted and, together with the first theme, combines to make this the heart of the work and a forerunner of the mature slow movements of the violin concerto and the symphonies. Elgar had originally planned a slightly larger-scale movement with the return of the opening expansive melody building up, in a similar way to the first time, into a fortissimo D minor climax (with Tuba stop) before dying down and slipping back into B flat major for a return of the ‘tranquillo’ music as we know it. These sixteen bars are disappointingly never heard, but their omission on structural grounds is probably justified – unlike, perhaps, the tempo and time signature change from Adagio 4/8.

The last movement is a sonata-form structure with the two main ideas providing a contrast between restless rising and falling first inversion triads in the minor key mainly in a quaver/two-semiquavers rhythm and a lyrical, lighthearted tune in the major key with dotted rhythms, rests, and larger than usual interval leaps. The development reintroduces the first theme from the slow movement which later provides a triumphant blaze of G major at the high point, marking the start of the coda. Here Elgar’s contrapuntal skill is again in evidence with the combination of the movement’s two main ideas in G major, a state which is slightly threatened within sight of the finishing line by the reappearance of E flats in mid-texture.
**Variations for Orchestra.** Op 36, sometimes accompanied by the phrase ‘on an original theme’ and commonly referred to as ‘The Enigma Variations’, were composed within the final months of 1898 and the beginning of 1899. The orchestral score was completed on February 19th 1899 and the first performance was conducted by Hans Richter on June 19th at St James’s Hall in London. For a major work, and one which would immediately transform Elgar’s reputation, it is remarkable that the piece progressed at all from its unlikely beginning. On October 21st 1898, Elgar returned home from The Mount School and after dinner started playing with some ideas on the piano. His wife heard a tune which she thought sounded interesting and asked him what it was: “Nothing” he replied “– but something might be made of it…”. Then, as a humorous musical game, he continued to improvise around this tune, giving it characteristics associated with various friends they knew. Just days later, on October 24th, he wrote to August Jaeger of Novello: ‘I have sketched a set of Variations (orkestra) on an original theme: the Variations have amused me because I’ve labelled ’em with the nicknames of my particular friends – you are Nimrod: That is to say I’ve written the variations each one to represent the mood of the ‘party’ – I’ve liked to imagine the ‘party’ writing the var: him (or her) self & have written what I think they wd. have written – if they were asses enough to compose – it’s a quaint idea and the result is amusing to those behind the scenes and won’t affect the hearer who ‘nose nuffin’. What think you?’

Whatever Jaeger thought, Elgar was certainly inspired, as noted by Rosa Burley at The Mount School the following week: ‘He came to The Mount in the rather excited state which usually indicated some new inspiration and played me a sixteen-bar tune on the piano. I thought it wistful but hardly of outstanding interest and asked what it was. So far as I remember he did not answer the question but continued to play, apparently extemporizing, a set of variations each of which, he said, represented a friend … He was far more concerned with the variations than with the underlying theme and constantly challenged me to guess whom they represented … In many cases the portraiture was astonishingly accurate and the translation of physical or mental characteristics into musical terms wonderfully ingenious. As the work progressed, indeed, and variation was added to variation, I realized that the complete set, when illuminated by Edward’s brilliant orchestration, might show an enormous advance on anything he had previously written. I believe it is true to say that Edward enjoyed the writing of the Variations more than that of any other work. I doubt indeed if he foresaw at the beginning that he had begun an important work.’
On November 1st Dora Penny vividly describes the scene:

The composer was in high spirits but I could get nothing out of either of them about the new music. All he said was: “You wait till we get home. Japes!” – taking up a spoon and conducting something with it. And I had to be content with that. No sooner inside the door than E.E. fled upstairs to the study, two steps at a time – I after him, the Lady following at a more sedate pace. “Come and listen to this”, and he played me a very odd tune – it was the theme of the Variations – and then went on to play sketches, and in some cases completed numbers, of the Variations themselves. I turned over and saw the next page headed ‘C.A.E.’, the Lady’s initials, something dedicated to her, evidently. Very serene and lovely – and in some curious way like her. Then he turned over two pages and I saw ‘No. III R.B.T.’, the initials of a connexion of mine. This was amusing! Before he had played many bars I began to laugh, which rather annoyed me. You don’t generally laugh when you hear a piece of music for the first time, dedicated to someone you know, but I just couldn’t help it, and when it was over we both roared with laughter! “But you’ve made it so like him! How on earth have you done it?” “Go on, turn over.” And the next piece was called ‘No. IV W.M.B.’, another connexion and a great friend; very energetic and downright. Why did it remind me of him so? I think then he played Troyte, and a shout of laughter followed. “What do you think of that for the giddy Ninepin?” After that ‘Nimrod’. “That must be a wonderful person, when am I going to meet him?” A voice from near the fire-place: “Oh, you will like him, he is the dearest person”… Then I turned over and had a shock. ‘No. X ‘Dorabella’. Being overcome by many emotions I sat silent when it was over. “Well, how do you like that – hey?” I murmured something about its being charming and rather like a butterfly, but I could think of nothing sensible to say … I had no idea what it really meant. It was not until many years afterward that it dawned on me that I had been as much the victim of E.E.’s impish humour as had R.B.T.

Ten days later, however, in a letter to Jaeger: ‘The Variations go on slowly but I shall finish ’em some day’. The impetus needed to complete the work came in January 1899 during a visit to London when he met Jaeger who proposed the idea of asking Hans Richter to conduct the first performance. By the third week of February the full score was on its way to Richter (via his agent Nathaniel Vert) who, to Elgar’s amazement, agreed. This internationally renowned conductor, who had such landmarks as the first performances of Wagner’s ‘Ring’ cycle at
Bayreuth, Bruckner’s Fourth Symphony and Brahms’s Third to his credit, and was Mahler’s predecessor in Vienna, would start the rapid transformation of a little known provincial English musician in his forties into a leading composer of the time.

It is interesting to note, from the still existing score sent to Richter in Vienna, that although the word ‘Enigma’ is written over the theme it is in pencil, and not in Elgar’s hand. Elgar himself never referred to the work as the ‘Enigma Variations’, insisting simply on ‘Variations’. It is just possible that he may have known of the already existing ‘Enigma Variations’ for piano ‘in the style of five eminent artists’ by Cipriani Potter: if so, this could be a reason for his refusal to use the title. He was very particular about his music being remotely associated with that of any other composer, let alone someone who was employed at one of the London institutions of music. However, when writing about *The Music Makers*, he said: ‘I have used the opening bars of the theme (Enigma) of the Variations because it expressed when written (in 1898) my sense of the loneliness of the artist…’. Significantly, the quote is used as a counterpoint to the words: ‘And sitting by desolate streams…for ever, it seems’.

There has always been a mystery or puzzle surrounding this work, arising largely from the following: (1) ‘on an original theme’; (2) ‘the theme is a counterpoint on some well-known melody which is never heard’ (R J Buckley, Elgar’s first biographer in 1904 and a reliable source); and (3), ‘through and over the whole set another and larger theme ‘goes’, but is not played’ (from Elgar’s programme note for the first performance). Elgar was always wary of the adjunct ‘on an original theme’, presumably because there was a doubt in his mind over the Enigma theme’s total originality. Furthermore, if the Enigma theme is derived from a ‘well-known melody which is never heard’, it is quite understandable that Elgar would want to avoid any possible adverse criticism. However, ‘a counterpoint’ does not necessarily mean that it will resemble ‘some well-known melody’ in any way (and therefore could be original) even though it may fit perfectly with it. This rules out many of the favourite suggestions for the hidden theme such as ‘Rule Britannia’, ‘Pop goes the Weasel’ or ‘Auld Lang Syne’ which Elgar himself said ‘would not do’. From early declarations to Troyte, such as: “It is so well-known that it is extraordinary that no one has spotted it”, and to the young Dorabella: “I thought that you of all people would guess it”, Elgar became more and more reluctant to talk about it at all. The fact that a prerequisite understanding of this hidden theme is irrelevant to appreciating the music (Elgar
always maintained that “The Variations should stand simply as a piece of music”) can perhaps be compared to a similar lack of religious or ornithological knowledge hindering an appreciation of Messiaen’s music.

With regard to ‘through and over the whole set’, this must apply to the whole work – i.e. the entire set of variations. ‘Another and larger theme “goes”’ surely cannot refer to a musical theme as this would entail an extremely broad musical interpretation of the word ‘goes’, and as Elgar says: it ‘is not played’. The overriding theme could simply be a reference to Elgar’s life to date (he was 42) – i.e. that of the artist struggling to succeed against all odds (see many of Elgar’s letters to Jaeger): cf. the sad mood of the Enigma theme (the first bar of which Elgar often used as a signature) at the beginning with the exciting and confident self-portrait which forms the finale. The variations in between portray his wife and friends who have helped and encouraged him to this pivotal point in his life and career.

As to the ‘Friends Pictured Within’, the following notes are based on those Elgar wrote to accompany the 1927 set of pianola rolls (his own words are quoted in brackets):

1. **C.A.E.** These initials stand for Elgar’s wife, Caroline Alice Elgar, and the four-note motif which is repeated several times under the theme represents the whistle Elgar gave when he arrived home. ['There is no break between the theme and this movement. The variation is really a prolongation of the theme with what I wished to be romantic and delicate additions; those who knew C.A.E. will understand this reference to one whose life was a romantic and delicate inspiration. ‘]

2. **H.D.S.-P.** ['Hew David Steuart-Powell was a well-known amateur pianist and a great player of chamber music. He was associated with B.G.N. (Cello) and the Composer (Violin) for many years in this playing. His characteristic diatonic run over the keys before beginning to play is here humorously travestied in the semiquaver passages; these should suggest a Toccata, but chromatic beyond H.D.S.-P.’s liking.’]

3. **R.B.T.** ['Richard Baxter Townshend, whose Tenderfoot books are now so well known and appreciated. The Variation has a reference to R.B.T.’s presentation of an old man in some amateur theatricals – the low voice flying off occasionally into ‘soprano’ timbre.’]
4. **W.M.B.** ['A country squire, gentleman and scholar. In the days of horses and carriages it was more difficult than in these days of petrol to arrange the carriages for the day to suit a large number of guests. This variation was written after the host had, with a slip of paper in his hand, forcibly read out the arrangements for the day and hurriedly left the music-room with an inadvertent bang of the door. In bars 15-24 are some suggestions of the teasing attitude of the guests.]

5. **R.P.A.** ['Richard P. Arnold, son of Matthew Arnold. A great lover of music which he played (on the pianoforte) in a self-taught manner, evading difficulties but suggesting in a mysterious way the real feeling. His serious conversation was continually broken up by whimsical and witty remarks. The theme is given by the basses with solemnity and in the ensuing major portion there is much light-hearted badinage.]

6. **YSOBEL** Isabel Fitton. ['A Malvern lady, an amateur viola player. It may be noticed that the opening bar, a phrase made use of throughout the variation, is an ‘exercise’ for crossing the strings – a difficulty for beginners; on this is built a pensive and, for a moment, romantic movement.]

7. **TROYTE** ['A well known architect in Malvern. The boisterous mood is mere banter. The uncouth rhythm of the drums and lower strings was really suggested by some maladroit essays to play the pianoforte; later the strong rhythm suggests the attempts of the instructor (E.E.) to make something like order out of chaos, and the final despairing “slam” records that the effort proved to be vain.’] Troyte thought the music represented himself and Elgar running for shelter having been caught in a thunderstorm.

8. **W.N.** Winifred Norbury. ['Really suggested by an eighteenth-century house. The gracious personalities of the ladies are sedately shown. W.N. was more connected with music than others of the family, and her initials head the movement; to justify this position a little suggestion of a characteristic laugh is given.]

9. **NIMROD** August Johannes Jaeger. *Jaeger* is German for ‘hunter’ and Nimrod is ‘the mighty hunter’. ['The variations are not all “portraits”; some represent only a mood, while others recall an incident known only to two persons. Something ardent and mercurial, in addition to the slow movement (No. IX), would have been needful to portray the character and temperament of A.J. Jaeger (Nimrod). The variation bearing this name is the record of a long summer evening talk,
when my friend discoursed eloquently on the slow movement of Beethoven, and said that no one could approach Beethoven at his best in this field, a view with which I cordially concurred. It will be noticed that the opening bars are made to suggest the slow movement of the Eighth Sonata (Pathétique). Jaeger was for years the dear friend, the valued adviser and the stern critic of many musicians besides the writer; his place has been occupied but never filled.’] The precise reference to the ‘Pathétique’ can be found by taking the first two notes of both bars 1 and 2, the first three (and 4) of bar 3 and transposing them up a fifth.

10. **DORABELLA** Dora Penny who had a slight, attractive stammer. [‘Intermezzo. The pseudonym is adopted from Mozart’s ‘Così fan tutte’. The movement suggests a dance-like lightness. The inner sustained phrases should be noted.’]

11. **G.R.S.** [‘George Robertson Sinclair, Mus. D., late organist of Hereford Cathedral. The variation, however, has nothing to do with organs or cathedrals, or, except remotely, with G.R.S. The first few bars were suggested by his great bulldog Dan (a well-known character) falling down the steep bank into the River Wye (bar 1); his paddling upstream to find a landing place (bars 2 and 3); and his rejoicing bark on landing (2nd half of bar 5), G.R.S. said, “Set that to music.” I did; here it is.’]

12. **B.G.N.** [‘Basil G. Nevinson, an amateur cello player of distinction and the associate with H.D.S.-P. and the writer (violin) in performances of many trios – a serious and devoted friend. The variation is a tribute to a very dear friend whose scientific and artistic attainments, and the whole-hearted way they were put at the disposal of his friends, particularly endeared him to the writer.’]

13. *** [‘The asterisks take the place of the name of a lady who was, at the time of the composition, on a sea voyage. The drums suggest the distant throb of the engines of a liner, over which the clarinet quotes a phrase from Mendelssohn’s ‘Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage’.’]

14. **E.D.U.** ‘Edoo’ was Lady Elgar’s nickname for her husband. [‘Finale: bold and vigorous in general style. Written at a time when friends were dubious and generally discouraging as to the composer’s musical future, this variation is merely to show what E.D.U. (a paraphrase of a fond name) intended to do. References made to Var. 1 (C.A.E.) and to Var. 9 (Nimrod), two great influences on the life and art of the composer, are entirely fitting to the intention of the piece. The whole of the work is summed up in the triumphant, broad presentation of the theme in the major.’]
The puzzling three asterisks of Variation 13, ***, are generally believed to represent the initials of Lady Mary Lygon – one early score was labelled L.M.L. – but the reasons given do not support this. The sea voyage was still several months in the future and Elgar had ample opportunity to ask permission for the use of her initials. It has often been reliably suggested that Elgar had someone else in mind and that Helen Weaver, to whom he was engaged in the early 1880s but could not marry because he was a Catholic and she a Unitarian, was really the subject. Rosa Burley is very clear on the matter: ‘I always supposed that his reason for withholding this lady’s name was that extremely intimate and personal feelings were concerned. The throbbing and the quotation from Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage (which might equally have come from the Schumann Piano Concerto or Leonora No 3) bore no reference to the liner and the sea voyage which were afterwards associated with this variation but, as might be expected in a movement named ‘Romanza’, expressed something very different.” Helen Weaver and Elgar visited Leipzig together and went to concerts at the Gewandhaus (founded by Mendelssohn) where one programme contained the Schumann Piano Concerto. The ‘unlucky’ number 13 may also be significant in that Elgar was deeply saddened by the departure of Helen Weaver from his life; her emigration to New Zealand would have necessitated a long sea voyage; and this variation immediately precedes Elgar’s XIV. At Elgar’s memorial service the music was chosen by Ivor Atkins. He was a close friend and confidante of Elgar and selected the Theme, C.A.E., Nimrod and *** to represent the Variations.

Finally, ‘The Variations’ on the organ? This is possible by means of the art of transcription which entails the re-creation of a work in terms of a suitable but different instrument from that originally conceived by the composer. When the transcriber is also a composer, there can often be the exciting possibility of additional creative strands, e.g. Elgar’s transcription for full orchestra of Bach’s Fantasia and Fugue in C minor or the Brahms/Schoenberg Piano Quartet in G minor. This is quite different from arrangement which essentially means that anything can be done to make a work playable – e.g. keys may be changed, harmonies altered/simplified and technical challenges accommodated.

The organ at its best is a tremendously versatile instrument, with a wealth of sounds controlled by the player from a number of keyboards and a pedal-board. With two hands performing in a similar way to a concert pianist, and two feet performing with the agility and flexibility of a tap-dancer, there is tremendous potential for playing anything from the simplest to the most complex scores. Registration is an integral part of the organists’ art and the selection of sounds during the
preparation of a performance is akin to the composer orchestrating a work from short score. An organist has to do this for each performance as no two instruments, or buildings in which they are housed, are alike. Modern combination systems aided by computer technology make this easier and give an almost limitless number of settings: hundreds may be required for the ‘orchestral or symphonic organ’ in contrast to the one general purpose, all-encompassing ‘Organo Pleno’ setting that can last for an entire piece. A knowledge of, and ear for, the multitude of timbres produced from the organ’s thousands of pipes is essential when dealing with ‘the orchestral organ’. It is partly the careful use and combination of these different colours, as well as judicious use of the ‘box’, which help to achieve expressiveness. Both methods are needed to achieve the bigger changes of sound level over the entire dynamic range of the instrument. Those stops whose pipes are enclosed in a ‘box’ can be made to crescendo and diminuendo by the opening and closing of shutters: the magical rise and fall of the ‘Celeste’ stops or the roar and almost disappearance of the ‘Full Swell’ can be used to good musical effect.

Texture is closely linked to registration and the choice of a chord’s spacing or register and dynamic is crucial. A full chord played fortissimo and staccatissimo can produce fewer decibels than a sustained chord of a few notes played on a single foundation/open flute-type stop. Clarity of melody or counterpoint needs particular attention and can be achieved in many ways. Whereas a pianist can give more weight to the fingers playing a melody in order to make it sing through, above or below the supporting harmony or other parts if the texture is contrapuntal, an organist will need to employ other means. Some of these are: (i) playing the melody on another manual (right or left hand) with a different tone colour, or one similar to the accompaniment but with a slight increase in the level of sound; (ii) playing the melody with the feet to utilize a particular sound colour, or simply for logistical reasons so that an interesting accompaniment, or other part(s) in contrapuntal music, can be given due attention; (iii) subtle phrasing with infinite variations of legato, non legato, emphasised notes, staccato and staccatissimo often requiring much finger substitution or even ‘splitting’ one hand between two adjacent manuals: feet, too, can phrase independently or even provide chords of up to four parts (more in extreme cases) in reasonable comfort.

Notes by KEITH JOHN ©2003
### GREAT ORGAN
- Double Geigen 16
- Large Open Diapason 8
- Small Open Diapason 8
- Geigen 8
- Hohl Flute 8
- Stopped Diapason 8
- Octave 4
- Wald Flute 4
- Octave Quint 2\(\frac{2}{3}\)
- Super Octave 2
- Mixture 19.22.26.29 IV
- Tromba (harmonic) 8
- Octave Tromba (harmonic) 4

### CHOIR ORGAN
- Contra Dulciana 16
- Claribel Flute 8
- Dulciana 8
- Lieblich Gedackt 8
- Salicet 4
- Flauto Traverso 4
- Harmonic Piccolo 2
- Dulciana Mixture 12.19.22 III
- Cor Anglais * 16
- Clarinet 8
- Tuba (from solo) 8
- Octave, Sub Octave, Unison Off
- Swell to Choir †, Solo to Choir †
- Great reeds on Choir

### PEDAL ORGAN
- Double Open Wood 32
- Sub Bourdon 32
- Open Wood 16
- Open Diapason (metal) 16
- Bourdon 16
- Dulciana (from solo) 16
- Violone (from solo) 16
- Octave Wood 8
- Flute 8
- Octave Flute 4
- Double Ophicleide 32
- Ophicleide 16
- Orchestral Trumpet 16
- (from solo)
- Bassoon (from solo) 16
- Posaune 8

### SWELL ORGAN
- Quintaton 16
- Open Diapason 8
- Stopped Diapason 8
- Salicional 8
- Vox Angelica (to CC) 8
- Principal 4
- Fifteenth 2
- Mixture 12.19.22.26.29 V
- Oboe 8
- Double Trumpet 16
- Trumpet 8
- Clarion 4
- Tremulant (light pressure only)

### SOLO ORGAN
- Contra Viola 16
- Viole d’Orchestre 8
- Viole Céleste (to bottom C) 8
- Harmonic Flute 8
- Concert Flute 4
- Orchestral Hautboy 8
- French Horn 8
- Tremulant
- Double Orchestral 16
- Trumpet * (harmonic)
- Tuba (unclosed & harmonic)

### SWELL ORGAN
- 8 thumb pistons to the Great,
- Swell, Choir & Solo Organs
- 8 foot pistons to Pedal & Swell
- (duplicating)
- 8 general pistons
- 2 general pistons to the couplers
- General cancel
- Sequencer
- 128 memory levels
- 2 sets of ‘stepper’ pistons under
  the Swell & Great keyboards
- 1 set of ‘stepper’ pistons set in
  the console for a registrant
- 2 sets of ‘stepper’ foot pistons

### PEDAL ORGAN
- Manual compass: 61 notes
- Pedal compass: 32 notes

* extra octave of pipes for use
  with the octave coupler
† denotes reversible foot piston
‡ denotes reversible thumb piston
THE ORGAN OF THE TEMPLE CHURCH, LONDON

This instrument was a gift from George Thalben-Ball’s friend Lord Glentanar of Aberdeenshire whose mansion, Glen Tanar House near Aboyne, contained this large four-manual organ in its ballroom. It was built by Harrison & Harrison in 1924 and, since its move to The Temple Church in 1954, at which time the 32’ extension to the Ophicleide was added, has remained tonally unchanged apart from the remodelling of the mixtures. As such, it is one of the finest organs of its kind. The electrics have been updated at various times, most recently in 2000 with the installation of the latest solid-state capture system.

KEITH JOHN

Keith John was born in Gloucester where he was a chorister in the cathedral choir under Herbert Sumsion. His subsequent studies resulted in a scholarship at the Royal College of Music, London, where his professors were Ralph Downes, Bernard Roberts and Ruth Gipps. An award by the Zürich Master Classes Foundation led him to study with Jean Guillou.

Keith John’s concerts, which include many aspects of organ music both familiar and unfamiliar, have taken him far and wide. For example Bach in Budapest, Schmidt in Altenberg, Mussorgsky in London, Handel in Tampere, Kikta in Milwaukee, Elgar in Paris, Messiaen in Reykjavik and Tchaikovsky in Madrid. As a composer, his composition *Rhythmic Energy* (the conclusion of a three-movement suite titled *Time and Motion*) has become an infamous recital tour de force, and, as a transcriber, he has

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added several ‘masterworks’ to the repertoire: Bach/Busoni Chaconne in D minor, Handel ‘Water Music’, Schumann Toccata, Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet* Suite and Stravinsky *Circus Polka* to name a few.

His concerts and recordings have won critical acclaim from the press with reviews such as: ‘Keith John’s brilliant technique is the servant of his musicianship – and of his great sense of fun’ (*The Musical Times*). ‘The passagework and articulation are so clean and precisely controlled that one is left breathless with admiration’ (*Organists’ Review*). ‘The organ in the hands of an artist with the ingenuity of Keith John is capable of an astonishing variety of tone colours and blends. John’s variations of registration are kaleidoscopic and his handling of this whole exploration of variation form is masterly’ (*BBC Music Magazine*).