

John JOUBERT

ORGAN MUSIC

SIX SHORT PRELUDES ON ENGLISH HYMN TUNES, OP. 125
PRELUDE ON THE OLD HUNDREDTH, OP. 15
REFLECTIONS ON A MARTYRDOM, OP. 141
PASSACAGLIA AND FUGUE, OP. 35
PRELUDE ON 'PICARDY', OP. 55
PRELUDE ON 'YORK', OP. 152
RECESSIONAL, OP. 135

Tom Winpenny

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDINGS

JOHN JOUBERT: A BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE

by Tom Winpenny

Born in Cape Town on 20 March 1927, John Joubert received an English upbringing and Anglican education in South Africa. His paternal ancestors – French Protestant settlers – had been granted land in the Cape (then a Dutch colony) in 1688, and his mother's Dutch forebears became anglicised when the British took possession of the colony in 1815.

Joubert was educated at the Diocesan College in Rondebosch, by Cape Town, but received his first musical instruction from his mother, a talented pianist and pupil of Harriet Cohen. Joubert's earliest compositions were performed by the thriving chapel choir at the College under the guidance of the Director of Music, Claude Brown. Joubert matriculated in music before progressing in 1945 to a degree course at the South African College of Music. As a result of private lessons he had already received with the College's former principal – the English composer W. H. Bell, who had emigrated to South Africa in 1912 – performances of early works were given by the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra. Joubert's *Threnody* – a memorial to his teacher – was performed by the orchestra shortly after Bell's death in 1946.

The award of a Performing Rights Society scholarship later that year enabled Joubert to study in London for four years at the Royal Academy of Music under Howard Ferguson, Alan Bush and Theodore Holland. During this time he was awarded prizes for works including a Concerto for Viola and Chamber Orchestra and a *Symphonic Study* for orchestra. A string quartet and *Divertimento* for piano duet were composed in the final years of his scholarship at the Academy and later published as his Op. 1 and Op. 2 respectively. Concurrently Joubert studied privately for the Durham University External B.Mus., graduating in 1950.

Shortly afterwards, he was appointed Lecturer in Music at the University of Hull, a position he held for twelve years. These years proved highly productive, resulting

in some of his most enduring works and securing many commissions. *Torches*, Op. 7a, was composed in 1951 for his wife Mary's pupils; it was later included in a best-selling anthology, *Carols for Choirs. O Lorde, the Maker of al Thinge*, Op. 7b (which won the Novello Anthem Composition Prize in 1952), and *There is no rose*, Op. 14, date from these years and reflect his strong roots in the Anglican choral tradition.

Joubert's two children were born in the 1950s, during which time he completed a Violin Concerto, Op. 13 (composed for the 1954 York Festival), the Symphony No. 1, Op. 20, and the Piano Concerto, Op. 25 (a commission from the Hallé Orchestra in 1957). His first full-length opera, *Silas Marner*, Op. 31, was staged in Cape Town in 1961 and performed in London later the same year. An octet, a string trio and a single-movement piano sonata also date from the 1950s and early '60s.

In 1962 Joubert took up a Lectureship of Music at the University of Birmingham; he was later promoted to a Senior Lectureship and then to a Readership. Works from this equally productive period include the three-act opera *Under Western Eyes*, Op. 51 (premiered in 1968), and the Symphony No. 2, Op. 68 (commissioned by the Royal Philharmonic Society in 1970); smaller-scale works include the *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis* in A, Op. 57 (1968), for St George's Cathedral, Cape Town, the song cycle *Six Poems of Emily Brontë*, Op. 63 (1969), and the String Quartet No. 2, Op. 91 (1977).

Joubert retired from the University of Birmingham in 1986 in order to devote more time to composition. He remains an Honorary Senior Research Fellow of the University, which awarded him an honorary Doctorate of Music in 1997. He continues to compose: major works from the last thirty years include the oratorio *Wings of Faith*, Op. 143, premiered in 2007 as part of a 'Joubertiade' – a nationwide celebration marking his 80th birthday. He was Composer in Residence at the 2010 Three Choirs Festival, to which he contributed *An English Requiem*, Op. 166 (for soloists, chorus and orchestra), alongside liturgical works. His *St Mark Passion*, Op. 180, a commission from Wells Cathedral, was first performed on Palm Sunday 2016 (Joubert's 89th birthday), and the long-awaited premiere of the opera *Jane Eyre*, Op. 134 (1987–97), was given in a concert performance in Birmingham the following October. Recordings of this premiere, and of a number of choral works, are being released in 2017 to mark his 90th birthday.

A NOTE ON MY ORGAN MUSIC

by John Joubert

The Cape Town Anglican foundation in which my schooldays were spent boasted a chapel, a choir and a fine three-manual Rushworth and Dreaper organ. Moreover, our Director of Music had been assistant to Sir Ivor Atkins at Worcester Cathedral and so we were fortunate in having the rich musical tradition of the Anglican Church affecting us at an impressionable age. I even began having organ lessons, an early contact with the instrument that was particularly useful to me when it came to composing works involving both choir and organ. It was a commission from Allan Wicks, then organist at Manchester Cathedral, that provided me with the opportunity of writing a work for organ solo. It became my *Passacaglia and Fugue* of 1961 [15]–[16], a work both inspired by Bach and intended as a tribute to his unique genius.

The *Passacaglia and Fugue* is my most ambitious and extensive work for organ solo. My shorter Bach-inspired pieces are more intimate in tone and smaller in scale, though no less intense for that. They are cast in the same mould as the chorale preludes in Bach's *Orgelbüchlein*, with the Anglican hymn now taking the place of the Lutheran chorale as the main source of material. The resulting *Six Short Preludes on English Hymn Tunes* [6]–[11] were commissioned for the 1990 Peterborough Festival and first performed there by Nicholas Danby. All the hymn tunes represented are old favourites of mine, first encountered many years before while still at school in South Africa.

There are two works in this recording which bear no reference to Bach. One is the *Recessional* [14], which is a transcription of a lament from my very first opera (*Antigone*, 1954) made for a volume of organ pieces in memory of the composer Kenneth Leighton, whose untimely death had occurred ten years before.

The second 'non-Bachian' work, *Reflections on a Martyrdom* (1997) [1]–[4], is on a similar scale to the *Passacaglia and Fugue*, but of a more programmatic nature

than its predecessor. It is based on material from my cantata *The Martyrdom of St Alban*, commissioned (appropriately enough) by the St Albans Chamber Choir and first performed by them in St Albans Abbey in June 1969. St Alban was England's first martyr. He was executed by the Romans for giving shelter to a fellow Roman who had converted to the Christian faith. My reflections on this story were commissioned by the Parish Church of St Alban the Martyr, Birmingham, where it was first performed by Roy Massey. In spite of its programmatic origins I hope my *Reflections* can still be regarded as a self-sufficient piece of music with its own emotional and structural content.

REFLECTIONS ON JOHN JOUBERT'S ORGAN MUSIC

by Tom Winpenny

St Albans Abbey is a fitting location for a recording of Joubert's *Reflections on a Martyrdom*, Op. 141 [1]–[4]: the Abbey (which was raised to cathedral status in 1877) stands on the site of Alban's execution and houses his shrine and a relic of the saint. The trial and beheading of Alban are recounted in Bede's *History of the English Church and People*. The four reflections, played without a break, are 'Recitative – St Alban's trial before the Roman magistrate' [1], 'Aria – his prayer for acceptance into the Christian faith' [2], 'Funeral March – The procession to the place of execution' [3], 'Epilogue – waters flow and flowers bloom at the scene of Alban's martyrdom' [4]. The Recitative is derived from the opening organ fanfare and from Alban's first phrase – 'I worship Jesus, the living God' – of *The Martyrdom of St Alban*. The Aria reworks music set in the cantata to the words 'Illuminate, O Christ my God, the blinded sight'. The Funeral March precedes the Aria in the cantata; the organ reflection transcribes and extends it. The Epilogue combines themes from the preceding sections in a peaceful conclusion.

Joubert's earliest extant organ work, *Prelude on the Old Hundredth*, Op. 15 [5], was composed in 1955. From a reflective opening over a sustained tonic pedal, the melody is presented in octaves in the tenor. The pedal part is later cut loose, the harmony becoming increasingly chromatic and the right-hand triplets more insistent, as the work builds to its peroration – the statement, in block harmony in the manuals, of the last phrase of the tune. The dense texture that follows incorporates the opening phrase of the melody in *stretto* and the mood unwinds to its initial tranquil state.

The *Six Short Preludes on English Hymn Tunes*, Op. 125 (1990) [6]–[11], were composed for performance on a new chamber organ of a single manual and only five stops built by Kenneth Tickell and Co. The effectiveness of a small instrument is demonstrated in the variety of these beautifully crafted miniatures, which are equally suited to performance on a larger organ, as here. 'Picardy' [6] – a new piece rather than a reworking of Joubert's 1971 *Prelude on the same tune* – opens the collection as a vivid toccata. The melody of 'Song One' [7] is set, highly ornamented, against a quasi-ostinato bass, resulting in a sparse but poignant *bicinium*. The melody 'Southwell' [8] – best known to the Lenten text 'Lord Jesus, think on me' – is heard amidst the *moto perpetuo* triplets of octatonic scales. The serenity of 'Abridge' [9] lies in the simplicity of its treatment as a canon at the octave. The three-part texture of 'Mon Dieu, prête-moi l'oreille' [10] is characterised by cross-rhythms and unusual harmonic twists. The final movement, 'Old Hundredth' [11], reworks Joubert's earlier *Prelude of the same name*, but in the new key of G, and judiciously adapted for a smaller instrument without pedals or swell-box.

The *Prelude on Picardy*, Op. 55 (1967) [12], was commissioned by Oxford University Press for a volume of simple organ works and presents two verses of the famous French melody. In the meditative opening verse, ascending and descending motives adorn the melody (Joubert employs a similar procedure in his setting of the same hymn in his *St Mark Passion*, Op. 180, of 2015). The second verse builds to a climax depicting the line 'that the powers of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away'.

The *Prelude on York*, Op. 152 [13] – the longest of Joubert's works based on hymn melodies – was composed in 2004 and premiered at the Annual Festival of New Organ Music in 2007. The tune – presented alone at the beginning of the track – has been a

favourite of Joubert's since his schooldays. The work explores the expressive symmetries of the tune, and reflects on its associated text (from Psalm 122): 'Pray that Jerusalem may have peace and felicity'. The three sections correspond to the three verses of the hymn: the melody is stated in the pedals in the outer sections but in the manuals in the central section.

The solemn *Recessional*, Op. 135 [14], was Joubert's contribution to *The Kenneth Leighton Memorial Album*, published in 1998, which also included contributions from Alan Ridout, Francis Jackson and Philip Moore. The solemn tread of the pedal part is overlaid with a plaintive melody in thirds; its repetition is embellished by wistful *arpeggio* figures.

The *Passacaglia and Fugue*, Op. 35, is a *tour de force*, displaying resourceful textures, polyphonic ingenuity and a tightly controlled sense of dramatic pacing. The chromatic eight-bar ground bass on which the *Passacaglia* [15] is based is constructed of rising sevenths and falling fifths; its fourteen statements are given principally to the pedals. In statements eight and ten the theme is concealed in the manual parts: the manual and pedal writing here is especially reminiscent of certain variations in Bach's *Passacaglia* in C minor, BWV 582. In contrast to Bach's great work, Joubert's recedes from its climax at the twelfth statement of the theme, ending inconclusively, in preparation for the *Fugue* [16]. The fugal theme is derived from the ground bass, but spins off into a string of semiquavers. Its intricate chromaticism, cross-phrasings and Reger-esque trills propel it with considerable urgency to a restatement of the complete ground-bass theme (introduced in the pedals), leading inexorably to a triumphant conclusion in C major.

Tom Winpenny is Assistant Master of the Music at St Albans Cathedral, where his duties include accompanying the daily choral services and directing the acclaimed Abbey Girls Choir. Previously, he was Sub-Organist at St Paul's Cathedral, and during this time he performed with the Cathedral Choir at the American Guild of Organists National Convention, performed in Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with Valery Gergiev and the London Symphony Orchestra, and played for many major state occasions. He has also broadcast regularly on BBC Radio and been featured on *Pipedreams* on American Public Media.

He began organ lessons under John Scott Whiteley while a chorister at York Minster, and continued as a Music Scholar at Eton College under Alastair Sampson. He subsequently studied with Thomas Trotter and Johannes Geffert, and won First Prize and Audience Prize at the 2008 Miami International Organ Competition.

Earlier in his career he held the post of Organ Scholar at Worcester Cathedral and then at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, before spending three years as Organ Scholar at King's College, Cambridge, where he graduated with a degree in music. With the Choir of King's College, he gave concerts in the USA, Hong Kong and throughout Europe, in addition to appearing as their accompanist on CD releases on EMI Classics.

His many solo organ recordings include works by Malcolm Williamson (Toccata Classics rocc 0246), music by Lennox and Michael Berkeley, John McCabe and Charles Villiers Stanford (Resonus Classics) and, for Naxos, music by Judith Bingham and Olivier Messiaen's cycles *L'Ascension* and *La Nativité du Seigneur*. He also directs St Albans Abbey Girls Choir in recordings of choral works by Mendelssohn and William Mathias, also on Naxos.

He has taken part in the first performances of works by Judith Bingham, Jonathan Dove, Francis Grier, Cecilia McDowall, Francis Pott, Alec Roth and Judith Weir. Recent engagements include recitals in Birmingham Town Hall, Salisbury Cathedral, Hildesheim Cathedral and Kristiansand Cathedral. He has also featured as organ soloist in John Rutter's Christmas celebration concerts at the Royal Albert Hall, and is an organ tutor for the annual Eton Choral Courses.



The Organ of St Albans Cathedral

Harrison & Harrison, Durham, 1962
Restored and rebuilt Harrison & Harrison, 2007–09



The Benedictine monastery of St Alban, founded about 739, was built on the site of the execution of Britain's first martyr, St Alban (c. 250AD). Various small organs are recorded as having existed in the Abbey Church before the dissolution of the monastery in 1539, but after that there is no record of an organ in the building until 1820, three centuries after the townspeople of St Albans had bought the Abbey as their Parish Church. In 1861 a three-manual organ by William Hill was installed; in 1885 it was enlarged and remodelled by Abbott & Smith of Leeds during the restoration of the building, which coincided with its elevation (in 1877) to cathedral status. Further work was undertaken in subsequent decades to improve the projection of sound throughout the 521-foot-long building: new organ cases, designed by John Oldrid Scott, were installed in 1908 and in 1929 the organ was re-voiced by Henry Willis to be much louder.

In 1958 Peter Hurford was appointed as the Cathedral organist; he was quickly gaining an international reputation as a brilliant performer and his appointment coincided with further restoration work to the fabric of the Cathedral, which necessitated the dismantling of the mechanically unreliable and tonally inadequate organ. Working closely with an adviser, Ralph Downes, Hurford drew up a specification for a new instrument inspired by the latest trends in organ-building from Europe; it would accompany services – in particular the core English cathedral repertoire – in both the nave and quire, and would also serve well for most of the solo repertoire. It would become the first English cathedral instrument to be built on Neo-Classical principles. The contract was placed with organ builders Harrison & Harrison of Durham; assembly in the Cathedral began at Easter 1962 and the organ was dedicated in November of that year.

The instrument is based on the principles of open-foot voicing and relatively low wind-pressures that Downes had employed in his work on the landmark organ for the Royal Festival Hall, London, in the 1950s. Downes was closely involved with the scaling and voicing of the pipes, and he considered spatial separation of all divisions, with sufficiently wide scaling of wide-open flutes, important for the projection of sound. Around one-third of the pipework of the previous organ was re-used, but was completely re-voiced. Scott's 1908 cases were retained: the pipework of the Swell and Great sits in north and south cases respectively. Pedal ranks, at floor level in the organ loft, are placed in both the cases, and a new *Positive* case, designed by Cecil Brown, houses the Choir division. The result is a coherent Classical sound – clear and focused to the listener even at the western end of the nave, and present to the performer. A fully stocked Swell division and a wealth of 16' and 8' stops on other divisions make the organ highly effective and supportive for accompaniment of the traditional cathedral choral repertoire.

A comprehensive refurbishment of the organ was carried out from 2007 to 2009 by Harrisons, the original builders, under the guidance of Andrew Lucas (the present Master of the Music). The soundboards were renewed and wind reservoirs restored; other parts of the instrument were returned to 'as new' condition. Compromises reached in the initial construction because of financial and other constraints were addressed: Principal stops at 2' pitch (curiously lacking on the original specification) are now available, and a fourth manual has been added for the Fanfare Trumpet. Originally on the Great, this stop was intended to act both as a solo and chorus reed: new 8' and 4' chorus reeds were provided for the Great in the restoration. A Nave division is prepared for on the Solo manual, which will further boost congregational singing down the great length of the nave. A 32' reed (extended to 16' pitch) and a Cimbalestern of six bells were also added, and the organ console was updated.

In 1963 Hurford founded the St Albans International Organ Festival and Competition, which secured the place of the instrument in English organ-building history. For over fifty years this organ has proved an inspiring and remarkably versatile instrument for its liturgical and concert demands.

A more detailed history, *The Organs and Musicians of St Albans Cathedral* by Andrew Lucas, is available from St Albans Cathedral: www.stalbanscathedral.org.

Tom Winpenny

Great Organ

1. Principal	16	20. Celeste	(tenor C)	8
2. Bourdon	16	21. Principal		4
3. Principal	8	22. Open Flute		4
4. Diapason	8	23. Nazard		2 / 3
5. Spitzflute	8	24. Octave		2
6. Stopped Diapason	8	25. Gemshorn		2
7. Octave	4	26. Tierce		13/5
8. Stopped Flute	4	27. Mixture	22.26.29	III
9. Quint	2 2/3	28. Cimbrel	29.33.36	III
10. Super Octave	2	29. Hautboy		8
11. Blockflute	2	30. Vox Humana		8
12. Mixture	19.22.26.29	31. Corno di Bassetto		
13. Bass Trumpet	IV-VI	(extra octave of pipes in treble)		16
14. Trumpet	16	32. Trumpet		8
15. Clarion	8	33. Clarion		4
16. Grand Cornet	1.8.12.15.17 (tenor g)	<i>iv Tremulant</i>		
<i>i Choir to Great</i>		<i>v Octave</i>		
<i>ii Swell to Great</i>		<i>vi Sub Octave</i>		
<i>iii Solo to Great</i>		<i>vii Unison Off</i>		

Choir Organ

17. Open Diapason8		34. Quintaton		8
18. Rohr Flute	8	35. Open Diapason8		
19. Viola	8	36. Gedackt-pommer		8
		37. Flauto traverso		8

38. Octave	4	59. Mixture IV	19.22.26.29	IV
39. Rohrflute	4	60. Fagotto		32
40. Waldflute	2	61. Bombardon		16
41. Larigot	1½	62. Fagotto (from 32')		16
42. Sesquialtera II	II	63. Bass Trumpet (Great)		16
43. Mixture IV	IV	64. Tromba		8
44. Cromorne	8	65. Shawm		4
<i>viii Tremulant</i>		<i>xvi Choir to Pedal</i>		
<i>ix Octave</i>		<i>xvii Great to Pedal</i>		
<i>x Unison Off</i>		<i>xviii Swell to Pedal</i>		
<i>xi Swell to Choir</i>		<i>xix Solo to Pedal</i>		
<i>xii Solo to Choir</i>				
Solo Organ		Nave Organ (prepared for)		
45. Corno di Bassetto (Swell)	16'	66. Bourdon		16
46. Grand Cornet (Great)	1.8.12.15.17	67. Diapason		8
(tenor g)	V	68. Rohr Flute		8
47. Fanfare Trumpet	8'	69. Octave		4
48. Cimbelsstern (6 bells)		70. Spitzflute		4
<i>xiii Octave</i>		71. Super Octave		2
<i>xiv Unison Off</i>		72. Mixture	19.22.26.29	IV
<i>xv Great Reeds on Solo</i>		73. Pedal Sub Bass		16
		<i>xx Nave on Great</i>		
		<i>xxi Nave on Solo</i>		
Pedal Organ		Combination couplers		
49. Sub Bass	32	<i>xxii Great and Pedal Combinations</i>		
50. Principal	16	<i>Coupled</i>		
51. Major Bass	16	<i>xxiii Generals on Toe Pistons</i>		
52. Bourdon	16			
53. Quint	10½	Balanced Swell Pedal (mechanical)		
54. Octave	8	Adjustable Choir Organ shutters (rotary dial)		
55. Gedackt	8			
56. Nazard	5½	The manual compass is CC–a, 58 notes; and the		
57. Choral Bass	4	pedalboard compass is CCC–G, 32 notes		
58. Open Flute	2			



Recorded on 10 and 11 August 2016 at the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban, St Albans, Hertfordshire

Produced, engineered and edited by Andrew Post (Vif Records)

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Publishers

All works are published by Novello, with the exceptions of the *Prelude on the Old Hundredth*, Op. 15, and *Prelude On 'Picardy'*, Op. 55, which are published by Oxford University Press, *Recessional*, Op. 135, which is published by Banks, and the *Prelude on 'York'*, Op. 152, which is published by Peters.

Booklet essays by John Joubert and Tom Winpenny

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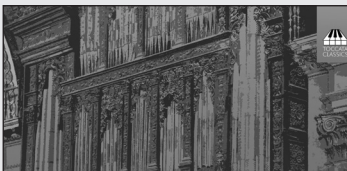
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Sverker Jullander, organ
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Modesto pastorale.
Wma III

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The Lion of Suffolk
Fons Amoris
Offertoire

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...and more John Joubert!

John JOUBERT
Four Song-Cycles
Shropshire Hills
Six Poems by Emily Brontë
for soprano and piano
The Rose is Shaken in the Wind
The Hour Hand
for soprano and recorder
Impression
for recorder and piano
Kontakion
for cello and piano
Lesley-Jane Rogers, soprano
John Turner, recorder
Richard Tunnicliffe, cello
John McCabe, piano

FIRST RECORDINGS

TOCC 0045

JOHN JOUBERT Organ Music

<i>Reflections on a Martyrdom, Op. 141</i>	(1997)*	13:51
1 I	Recitative –	2:11
2 II	Aria –	4:23
3 III	Funeral March –	3:34
4 IV	Epilogue	3:43
5 <i>Prelude on the Old Hundredth, Op. 15</i>	(1955)*	2:37
<i>Six Short Preludes on English Hymn Tunes, Op. 125</i>	(1990)	13:42
6 I	Picardy	2:00
7 II	Song One	2:54
8 III	Southwell	1:58
9 IV	Abridge	2:26
10 V	Mon Dieu, prête-moi l'oreille	1:58
11 VI	Old Hundredth	2:26
12 <i>Prelude on 'Picardy', Op. 55</i>	(1967)	2:38
13 <i>Prelude on 'York', Op. 152</i>	(2004)*	6:33
14 <i>Recessional, Op. 135</i>	(1998)	3:27
<i>Passacaglia and Fugue, Op. 35</i>	(1961)	11:47
15	Passacaglia	6:25
16	Fugue	5:22

Tom Winpenny, organ of St Albans Cathedral

TT 55:39

*FIRST RECORDINGS