

## **Review of Bach's 340<sup>th</sup> Birthday Concert by Christopher Burrows in St Mary's on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2025**

This was a technically and emotionally brilliant performance of some of J.S. Bach's most difficult compositions.

Christopher began by explaining that in his opinion, and I would entirely concur, Bach's non religious compositions, often based on complex mathematical permutations of a simple original tune, were written by the composer to be played with fervour, emotion and also a sense of fun and enjoyment and not as rigid pieces with no expression. Christopher gave us a spirited and most impressive performance of pieces including some so complex that few performers attempt them. He played Bach's Toccata in E minor (BWV 914), three of Bach's Little Preludes (E Minor BWV 941 from Five Little Preludes and F major BWV 927 & G minor BWV 930 from Twelve Little Preludes), Prelude and Fugue in C minor BWV 871 from the Well Tempered Clavier, Contrapunctus I from the Art of Fugue BWV 1080, French Suite No 3 BWV 814, The Aria and numbers 3, 13 and 18 of the Goldberg Variations BWV 988, Ich ruf du zir Herr Jesu Christ BWV 639 and finished with BWV 912 Toccata in D Minor.

My own favourite piece was the one I was especially thrilled to see in the program which was the final Toccata in D minor, one of Bach's earliest keyboard compositions, published originally by his oldest brother, in which the composer displays his revolutionary approach to musical rules with an exciting experiment in Italian Toccata form which begins at very high speed and gets faster, ending with a very wild fast dance in which Bach works through every musical key.

Christopher used an electronic keyboard for most of the pieces as the clavier instruments in Bach's time were different to modern pianos which do not have the speed of notes needed for many of the pieces.

It was an impressive and enjoyable performance and everyone leaving the concert had big smiles on their faces.

The concert was followed by a social time with tea and cakes in the Morrell Rooms provided by FoSM to whom any profits from the donations go.

We would like to thank Christopher very much for working so hard to entertain us in honour of Bach's birthday. I would also like to thank all the wonderful volunteers who work so hard to make these concerts a success, run the ticket sales and serve the teas, especially John, Elaine and Linda, and to all our splendid cake makers.

I would also like to thank our wonderful audience without whom our concerts could not take place. In an improvement on the weather for the last two concerts it did rain but not torrentially.

Our next St Mary's Concert will be piano duets by Ikuko Inoguchi and Sally Goodworth on Sunday May 11<sup>th</sup> at 4pm

*Stella Robinson*

