

Sonata:

Edmund Schulze builds an organ for the Church of St George, Doncaster

1 A flight of ideas

2 Thuringian forest

*3 The sea and river journey of the wooden pipes
and the 32' metal Contra Posaune via Hull*

4 Completion of the project (the music not yet written)

Anthony Skilbeck

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Born in Coventry (1947), Anthony Skilbeck's composing life has been supported by work as a teacher, pianist, organist and choir trainer. Musical studies were begun during Skilbeck's childhood in Bournemouth, where his principal musical mentor was Michael Peterson. First professional qualifications were obtained whilst studying at the Royal College of Music and London University Institute of Education. Since 1977 he has resided in Nottinghamshire. In 2000, composition studies with David Harold Cox and George Nicholson culminated in a Ph.D. degree for original composition being awarded by The University of Sheffield. During his time as a mature student, for a short period, Skilbeck also studied the interpretation of organ music with Nicolas Kynaston.

Of his compositional language (usually atonal, but "listener-friendly") Skilbeck writes:

The pianoforte music of Debussy and works from Schoenberg's 1908 to 1912 period have had a particular influence on my harmonic language, which is not based on and has not evolved into a text-book schema. Only comparatively rarely does my music find itself in a key, creation and release of tension in harmony and melody holding a greater interest for me than the use of keys and their relationships. This gives rise to compositions often starting in one area of harmony and ending in another. Justification for a language neither tonal nor serial was strengthened on the discovery of Liszt's *Bagatelle without Tonality*.

The tritone, whole tones and the bitter-sweet intervals of minor and major sevenths figure prominently. Practical knowledge of contrapuntal organ works has been significant, but I have not been drawn to overtly mathematical processes, though frequently changing and unusual time signatures are often employed.

Planning a structure, or letting one evolve, gives me much pleasure, as does finding that a passage of my music has an evocative quality. The expression of moods and human temperaments fascinates me.

A flight of ideas is like an overture in that, sometimes hidden by surrounding toccata figuration, the seven themes to be used throughout the four movements (in some guise or other) are here presented.

The title refers to an aspect of the creative process, imagining the state of Schulze's mind having been asked to build an organ for the Church of St George. The word *flight* suggested the inclusion of a fugue, for "Fugue" in French ("Fuga" in Italian) means "flight". A fugal exposition therefore ends the movement (bars 30 to 51), the subject being Theme 6, which is derived from themes 2 and 3.

The development of the subject takes place in the third movement in bars 113-123; 124-129; 133-144 and in bars 147-152 (the "rainbow" section). Bar 286 to the end of the third movement comprise the final section of the fugue. There must have been a Dedication service for the new organ, so the last movement (*The completion of the project*) may have incorporated allusions and even quotes from music performed in that service. It is unlikely that my illness will allow me time to complete this task.

The concept of spreading the sections of a fugue over a number of movements is a structural idea first used in my Organ Concerto of 1979.

On the 17th June 2004, St George's was granted Minster status and is now known as Doncaster Minster.

It should be noted that there have been many additions to the 1862 Schulze instrument. This sonata was written for the organ as it was in 2004. A specification can be found on the Internet.

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4

Gt. & Ped. see bar 12

Sw. & Ch. Full, boxes closed

Cops. Sw., Ch. & Solo to Gt.. Sw. & Solo to Ch.

♩ = ca. 84 Duration ca. 4'

1 A flight of ideas

Anthony Skilbeck

1

Ch. *mf*

sim.

with excitement

The right hand thumb notes (excluding repetitions) comprise the hidden Theme 1

Detailed description: This system contains the first two measures of the piece. The right hand (treble clef) features a melodic line with a series of eighth-note patterns, each group of seven notes bracketed with a '7'. The left hand (bass clef) provides a harmonic accompaniment with eighth notes. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first measure ends with a repeat sign (double bar line with two dots). The second measure ends with a final cadence (double bar line with a fermata).

3

Detailed description: This system contains measures 3 through 8. The right hand continues the melodic line with similar eighth-note patterns. The left hand accompaniment remains consistent. The key signature changes to two sharps (F# and C#) at the start of measure 5. The time signature changes to 3/4 at the start of measure 6. The first measure of this system ends with a repeat sign. The second measure of this system ends with a final cadence.

6

Detailed description: This system contains measures 9 through 14. The right hand continues the melodic line. The left hand accompaniment remains consistent. The key signature changes to two flats (Bb and Eb) at the start of measure 11. The time signature changes to 4/4 at the start of measure 12. The first measure of this system ends with a repeat sign. The second measure of this system ends with a final cadence.

Musical score for measures 8-11. Treble and bass clefs. Time signatures 4/4, 3/4, 4/4. Includes fingering numbers 2, 5, 7 and slurs.

Musical score for measures 10-15. Treble and bass clefs. Time signatures 4/4, 6/4. Includes "cresc." marking, "sopra (& forward)" instruction, and fingering numbers 2, 4, 5, 7.

Theme 3 (bars 12 and 14 combined are used as rondo material)

Musical score for measures 12-15. Treble and bass clefs. Time signatures 6/4, 4/4, 6/4. Includes "Gt. { ff bravura", "(leg.)", and "(Gt.)" markings, and fingering numbers 2, 3, 4, 5.

6

Gt. reduce (see bar 18)

14

ff

(leg.)

(Gt.)

sopra (& forward)

-u

16

sotto

(Gt.)

sopra (& forward)

Ch. (no reeds)

mp legato

18

f

seriamente

Gt. rilievo

20 (Ch.) 7

Ch.

Gt. (rilievo)
Theme 5

23

25 (Ch.)

crescendo

Gt. ff

8 27 Theme 3
Gt.

bravura

ff Theme 2

♩ = ca. 120

Ch. or possibly Solo Harmonic Flute. No mutations.

gva

29 *rallentando* Short

Reduce during bar 29

mp pensieroso

Theme 6, based on themes 2 and 3.
The Subject of this fugal exposition (see notes)

For short compass instruments, play bars 30 and 31 an octave lower.

33 Theme 7 (New material; the Counter-subject)

Sw. *pochiss. rit.* *mp* (Sw. *p*)

Second entry of Subject

37 *m.d.* (Sw.) *mf* Ch. *mf*

Third entry of Subject

41 Add Sw. *mf*

Fourth entry of Subject

Ped. including 16'

45 Add *crescendo (box)* *poco rall.*

crescendo (box)

poco rall.

Fifth (redundant) entry of Subject to show Counter-subject below

Registration as at bars 12 and 27

10 **A tempo** (♩ = ca. 120)

48

risoluto

Gt. or solo reed 8' (both hands)

poco rallentando

♩ = ca. 60

52

2nd phrase of Theme 3

1st phrase of Theme 3

Add

Gt. { *ff risoluto*

(leg.)

ff

2nd phrase of Theme 2

1st phrase of Theme 2

allargando

55