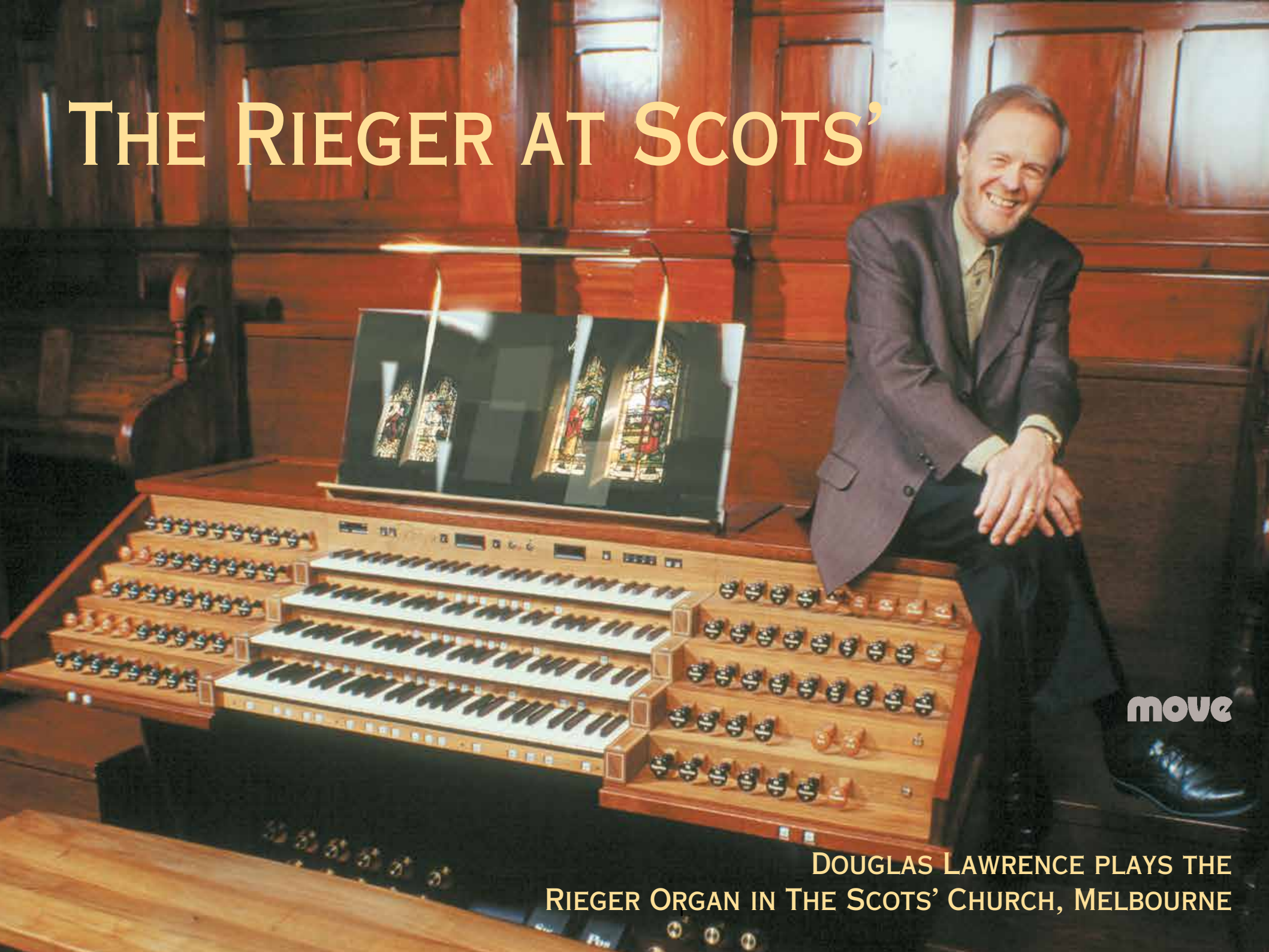


THE RIEGER AT SCOTS'



move

DOUGLAS LAWRENCE PLAYS THE
RIEGER ORGAN IN THE SCOTS' CHURCH, MELBOURNE

THE RIEGER AT SCOTS'

move

DOUGLAS LAWRENCE

Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

- 1** *Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne in C* 5'05"
- 2-4** *Three Choral Preludes* 4'47"
- 5** *Ciacona in E minor* 5'26"

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)

- 6-15** *Chorale Partita* 7'55"

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

- 16-18** *Trio Sonata No. 1 in E Flat major, BWV 525* 11'44"
- 19** *O Mensch beweine deine Sünde, BWV 622* 4'33"

François Couperin (1668-1733)

from the *Messe pour les Convents*

- 20** *Plein Jeu* 0'58"
- 21** *Fugue sur la trompette* 1'33"
- 22** *Recit de Chromhorne* 1'53"
- 23** *Plein Jeu* 1'26"
- 24** *Duo sur les Tierces* 1'30"
- 25** *Basse de Trompette* 2'05"
- 26** *Dialogue sur la Voix humaine* 1'53"
- 27** *Dialogue sur les grands jeux* 1'30"
- 28** *Tierce en Taille* 2'30"
- 29** *Plein Jeu* 0'44"
- 30** *Dialogue sur les grands jeux* 1'23"

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

- 31-33** *Sonata No. 6* 14'13"

Henri Mulet (1878-1967)

- 34** *Carillon Sortie* 4'44"

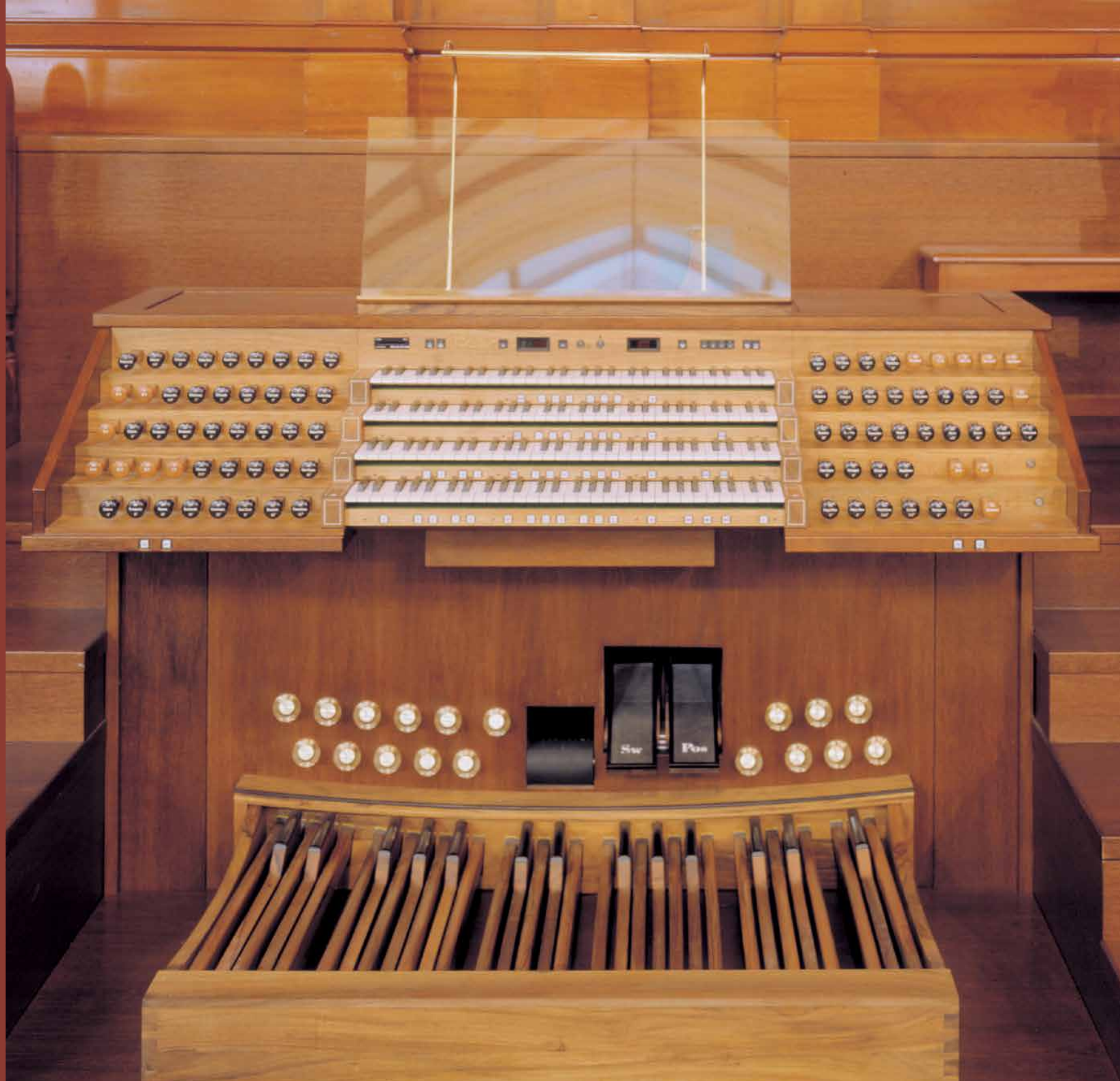
So just what does one play to demonstrate the resources of a large, beautifully voiced new organ? **Douglas Lawrence** has tried here to show something of the immensely wide tonal palette available on the Rieger organ at **The Scots' Church** in Melbourne, completed in 1999. On one disc it is not possible to give more than an aural glimpse of the endless possibilities in an organ as fine as this one. Nonetheless, there are magic sounds here and the listener will hear examples of many classical registrations from the great periods of composition.



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WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING



THE RIEGER AT SCOTS'

THE PREMIERE RECORDING OF THE RIEGER ORGAN AT THE SCOTS' CHURCH, MELBOURNE

The question of a new organ at **Scots' Church, Melbourne** had been under discussion for more than a decade.

Quotations were received from organbuilders in Britain, Ireland, Europe, Canada and the United States before a decision was made to award the contract to the Rieger firm. Douglas Lawrence had enjoyed a wide experience of its instruments through recitals and was most impressed by the mechanical and tonal excellence of the firm's work and its painstaking attention to detail.

The new Rieger organ of four-manuals and 68 speaking stops was designed in association with Douglas Lawrence and the church's organ committee. Construction began in 1998 and it was installed in the church between July and November 1999 by a team from the firm which is located at Schwarzarch, Southern Austria. It was dedicated on Sunday 28 November of that year at a service to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the building of the present Scots' Church.

The main section of the instrument is located behind the original cedar case of 1874, which was repaired, repolished and resited on a new plinth, forward and higher than its original



buried position. In its new position, the fine carved detailing may be seen to excellent advantage; new matching side panels have also been fitted.

The case is the most important and elegant surviving example of an organ case designed by Joseph Reed's architectural firm (its magnum opus in this area was the colossal case for the organ formerly in the Exhibition Building). The new tin façade pipes emphasise the magnificence of the design and have French mouths inlaid with gold leaf.

The instrument is entirely new and exhibits an outstanding generosity in construction, extending to the massive deal building frame,

passage boards, ladders, trunking, windchests, etc. – all on the grandest scale and worthy to rank with the best examples from the 19th century from such names as Hill and Cavallé-Coll.

The larger pedal pipes are placed at the rear of the original organ chamber with the swell located within the arch above, the shutters in double-banks following the line of the arch.

Within the main body of the transept, the enclosed positive is placed at a lower level, behind Gothic arcades thoughtfully provided by Joseph Reed (which are understood to have given access to the original interior).

At the impost level, the great is placed in the centre, with the smaller pedal pipes on either side and at the rear.

At the rear of the church, and divided on either side of the large four-light window, is placed the gallery division. The façade has been designed by the Rieger firm to match closely in stylistic idiom the original organ case, and therefore incorporates identical motifs, such as the cornices, carved pipeshades and fleur-de-lis filials.

This division is operated on a newly-developed proportional electric action where the movement of the soundboard pallet is parallel to the movement of the manual key. A second console (single manual and pedal) is located centrally in the gallery to operate this division. The 1909 echo organ, which was located above and partially obscured the window, has been removed. The whole is operated from a four-manual console with terraced parallel jambs, located at floor level



in front of the main organ. The drawstops are of turned ebony and are lettered in white serif script. The instrument is fitted with an extensive combination action and a *rollschweller* for the performance of the German romantic repertoire. The piston heads for the reversible couplers light up when depressed.

The action works extremely well and although the weight naturally increases with coupling, the whole is extremely manageable and a testimony to fine engineering and design skills. The electric action to the gallery organ works extremely responsively and the key touch gives the tactile sensation of being mechanical in operation.

The instrument, which is the most sizeable entirely new organ to be installed in Victoria since the Melbourne Town Hall instrument in

1929, has a total of 87 ranks of pipework (the 1982 Casavant at the Melbourne Concert Hall is slightly smaller with 84 ranks). It is a major contribution to Australia's heritage of fine instruments. The firm's other instruments in Australasia are at the Festival Theatre in Adelaide, now more than twenty years old, and the Concert Hall in Christchurch, opened in 1997.

The overall ensemble is rich and warm, with ample gravity and clarity. The scaling of the flues is wide and there are no intrusive speech initiation transients such as were in vogue at the height of the *orgelbewegung*: in any case, such approaches have now been abandoned by the leading European builders. The romantic sounds include vibrant strings, slotted and bearded: the Swell unison strings are particularly fine and complemented by a Viola 4, while the Great Gamba is rich and adds much colour to the ensemble. The Positive Open Diapason has a pronounced string quality. There are attractive overblowing open flutes as well as stopped flutes, all possessing a strong individual character. The fundamental sounds of the pedal division are all that one could hope for, with a strong 32ft flue which makes its presence felt and an open wood 16, which is harmonically rich and akin to a large Violone. The chorus reeds are bright, of essentially French character, and blend admirably with the fluework. The Trompette Royale in the gallery is a triumph of low pressure reed voicing. The quieter reeds are most attractive – especially the two distinctive Positive reeds.

Overall the choruses are extremely well-balanced and the mixture compositions have intentionally been kept low to ensure a well-integrated sound across the tonal spectrum. It is good to see a very complete great chorus from open double up to two mixtures and including a Twelfth, a rank that has been almost abandoned in recent years, but which performs a valuable function in binding the chorus together.

One's impression then, is that of a refined and beautiful sound, not lacking in power when required. Having heard a number of Rieger instruments including Ratzeburg Cathedral, the Adelaide Festival Theatre and Christ Church, Oxford and their more recent organ in St. Giles', Edinburgh, I would rate the Scots' instrument as least as good as any of these.

It is certain that the instrument will make a major contribution to music-making in Melbourne and beyond and attract international players of the highest calibre.

JOHN MAIDMENT OAM
Chairman, Organ Historical Trust of Australia



THE MUSIC

So just what does one play to demonstrate the resources of a large, beautifully voiced new organ? I have tried here to show something of the immensely wide tonal palette available on this new

Rieger. On one disc it is not possible to give more than an aural glimpse of the endless possibilities in an organ as fine as this one. There are magic sounds here and the listener will hear examples of many classical registrations from the great periods of composition.

The story of Johann Sebastian Bach's journey to Lübeck to hear **Dietrich Buxtehude** (1637-1707) is universally known. It is hardly fanciful to believe that he played for Buxtehude. What must the old master have thought of this amazing young man? In Buxtehude's wild quasi-improvisational toccatas one senses the early works of Bach, but the Buxtehude pieces are more complete; more mature and to some, more satisfying. In these works the true glory of the organs of that place and time is revealed.

The *Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne in C* (track **1**) commences with a sweeping pedal solo punctuated by big chords then moves without break into a lively fugue. A quiet interlude precedes an ebullient chaconne which in turn dovetails into yet another toccata. The work begins and ends Organo Pleno, that is the stops of the organ, up to the mixtures and reeds on Great, Positive and Pedal.

In the first of three chorale preludes, *Nun komm der Heiden Heiland* (Now come, Holy Saviour, track **2**), the solo is played on the sesquialtera in

this gently ornamented version of an ancient Advent chorale. *Jesus Christus unser Heiland* (Jesus Christ our Saviour, track **3**) has the music written on two staves, however I have followed here the old practice of playing the chorale in the pedal. The solo stop is the Swell Organ 2 foot Octavin. In *Puer natus in Bethlehem* (A child is born in Bethlehem, track **4**) we hear the Cymbelstern (tuned bells) pealing in the birth of Christ. The solo is played on the Stopped Diapason, Chimney Flute and Larigot on the Positive Organ.

The *Ciacona in E minor* (track **5**) is an exercise in ground bass, or chaconne, or passacaglia – the terms are interchangeable. Many chaconne themes have this sort of wide ranging shape. The great Bach Passacaglia theme covers an octave plus six tones. This theme of Buxtehude's is more modest but underpins wonderfully elegant variation writing. After ten variations an interlude is



heard, following which the chaconne returns in repeated notes. It is then fragmented, stated chromatically, and finally after a typical Buxtehudian pedal flourish, this short masterpiece draws to a close.

Apart from two works – the *Toccata in D minor* and the *Ricercare in C minor* – Buxtehude's contemporary, **Johann Pachelbel** (1653-1706) does not treat the organ pedal in an obligato, that is, in a truly independent manner. Instead, Pachelbel wrote in an entirely different style, composing intimate and one could say, sunny music. His several sets of variations on chorales are amongst the best compositions in this style; not bombastic but gentle, lovely music, needing warm sounds from the organ and a rather rubato style of playing. This music can sound mechanical but if it does the player has not got to the heart of these beautiful works. The *Chorale Partita* (tracks **6-15**) is written on the chorale *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan* (What God does is done well). In variation four (track **9**) we hear one of Pachelbel's characteristically cheeky exercises in chromaticism.

All the early roads of music lead to **Johann Sebastian Bach** (1685 -1750). Here I have chosen to play one of the six supreme trio sonatas and also what is regarded by many organists as one of Bach's most intimate chorale preludes.

Keller writes of the *Trio Sonata no 1 in E flat major* BWV 525 (tracks **16-18**), as possessing "Mozartian grace". Rather I would like to think that Mozart's grace was something



rather Bachian! It was Mozart, who upon studying the parts for the great motet *Jesu, Meine Freude*, said "Now here is something one can learn from." Indeed – and many organists spend their entire lives studying these elusive trios in order to play them in a worthy manner. Agility, speed, gracefulness, above all, a real well rounded, articulated but not fussy way of playing these works should be the performers aim. They must, above all sing, even in the busier moments. The sonata is in three movements – (Allegro moderato), Adagio and Allegro.

In *O Mensch beweine deine Sünde* BWV 622 (O man bewail thy grievous sin, track **19**) Bach gives the chorale to the right hand. The solo on this recording is played on the 4 foot Principal on the Positive Organ one octave lower. This prelude tells in intimate musical detail the story of Christ's life and death.

Indeed one could write a long essay on this work alone. Death comes with a dramatic chromatic change in the last bar. When I first played this work for the great Austrian organist, Anton Heiller, I placed an ornament on the penultimate measure. Heiller placed a hand on my shoulder and said, "I tell you, Douglas, there is no ornament at death." I no longer play the ornament.

François Couperin (1668-1733), the most illustrious of a long line of Couperins, left us just two sets of pieces; the *Messe pour les Paroisses* and the *Messe pour les Convents* ("The Mass for the Parishes" and "The Mass for the Convents"). These two books however demonstrate in the most vivid and musical fashion the resources of a large 17th Century French organ and further, instruct us in the manner in which to perform this elegant music. The titles of each movement tell the organist which stops to use. There are many treatises on registration from around Couperin's time and they generally agree on which stops are to be used. The music is difficult to play because it is both free and yet must be played in a disciplined fashion – historical registration, a sense of style and a good tempo are not enough. Marie Claire Alain when teaching this music always uses the expression "le bon gout" – good taste – and indeed that is the key to this wonderful music. The academic approach alone will never yield a musical performance. On this recording we will hear from *Messe pour les Convents* (tracks **20-30**) – *Plein Jeu*, *Fugue sur la trompette*, *Recit de Chromhorne*, *Plein Jeu*, *Duo sur les Tierces*, *Basse de Trompette*, *Dialogue sur*



la Voix humaine, Dialogue sur les grands jeux, Tierce en Taille, Plein Jeu and Dialogue sur les grands jeux.

Sonata no 6 on *Vater unser im Himmelreich* (Our Father in Heaven) was **Felix Mendelssohn's** last work (tracks **31-33**). In his short life (1809-1847), Mendelssohn composed two important sets of organ works, the three *Preludes and Fugues* and the six sonatas. In London at the time he would have been hard pressed to find a place to play these works as they demand a full pedal board. Very few English organs had even a rudimentary pedal board. A prominent organist of the time said: "Sir, I never did play on a gridiron in my entire life."

The organ works of Mendelssohn take the music of Bach as their starting point. They pay homage to the old master; something

which Mendelssohn did all his life. Indeed it was Mendelssohn who, with his performances of the *B Minor Mass*, brought J.S. Bach back to life for the listening public of his day. The sixth sonata is in the form of a theme and variations. The chorale is heard and thereafter follow four variations without break. A solemn fugue leads to Mendelssohn's final testament – the ethereal *Andante* – where we hear solos from the Harmonic Flute and Cromorne, and, for the first time on this disc, the *Voix Celeste* (heavenly voice), singing perhaps the praises of Mendelssohn's beautiful music.



After the all-powerful figure of Bach, the world had to wait a long time for another truly great school of organ composition. With the late 19th Century emergence of what we call the French Romantic School the organ again asserted its position as the King of Instruments. There are several important names here: Auguste Cesar Franck, Charles Marie Widor, Josef Rheinberger, Felix Guilmant and the incomparable Louis Vierne are perhaps the most prominent from that period. **Henri Mulet** (1878-1967) enters, as it were, on the tail end of this activity. His best known work is *Tu es Petra*. On this disc however, we hear the rip roaring toccata – *Carillon Sortie* (track **34**). It is the quintessential French Romantic toccata: its unrelenting movement climaxing in full organ, grounded always on a simple, yet hypnotic theme.

DOUGLAS LAWRENCE

THE SCOTS' RIEGER ORGAN SPECIFICATION

GREAT ORGAN (I)

Double Diapason A	
16	
Open Diapason	8
Chimney Flute	8
Harmonic Flute	8
Gamba	8
Principal	4
Open Flute	4
Twelfth	2-2/3
Fifteenth	2
Mixture Major	15.19.22.26 IV
Mixture Minor	19.22.26 III
Cornet (tf)	1.8.12.15.17 V
Bombarde	16
Trompette	8
Clarion	4
II to I	
III to I	
IV to I	

POSITIVE ORGAN (II) (enclosed)

Open Diapason	8
Stopped Diapason	8
Principal	4
Chimney Flute	4
Sesquialtera	12.17 II
Fifteenth	2
Larigot	1-1/3
Sharp mixture	22.26.29.33 IV
Trompette	8
Cromorne	8

Tremulant
III to II
IV to II

SWELL ORGAN (III) (enclosed)

Bourdon	C-B wood	16
Diapason		8
Bourdon		8
Viole de Gambe		8
Voix Céleste	gvd. bass	8
Principal		4
Traversflute		4
Viola		4
Nasard		2-2/3
Octavin		2
Tierce		1-3/5
Tremulant		
IV to III		

PEDAL ORGAN

Contrabass	F pine)	32
Open Diapason	(Metal) (1-12 A)	16
Open Diapason	(Wood) (pine)	16
Bourdon	F (oak / pine)	16
Principal		8
Bassflute		8
Fifteenth		4
Mixture	12.15.19.22	IV
Contrabombarde	G (1-12 pine)	32
Bombarde	G (metal)	16
Basson		16
Trompette		8
Clairon		4
I to Pedal		
II to Pedal		

III to Pedal
IV to Pedal

GALLERY ORGAN (IV) (electric action)

Bourdon	B (oak / pine)	16
Echo Diapason	C8	
Gedakt	D	8
Saliciona	I	8
Wood Princpal	E (oak)	4
Chimney Flute		4
Fifteenth		2
Mixture	19.22.26.29IV	
Trompette Royale	8	
Tremulant		
Cymbelstern		

GALLERY PEDAL ORGAN

Bourdon	B	16
Echo Diapason	C	8
Gedakt	D	8
Wood Principal	E	4
Gallery to Gallery Pedal		

COMPASS

58 / 32

ACTIONS

- Key actions to main organ mechanical.
- Key actions to gallery organ electric
- Electric stop actions.

ACCESSORIES

- 8 general pistons each on 32 levels.
- 6 thumb pistons for each division.

- 4 adjustable crescendi via rollschweller
- Sequencer forwards / backwards, thumb, toe & reigistrant.
- General cancel.
- Great pistons to pedal pistons.
- Great pistons to gallery.
- Memocard (memory card for registrations)

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in Melbourne in 1943, Douglas Lawrence was educated at the University of Melbourne and then, after completing a Master's degree, at the Musikhochschule in Vienna. His teachers in Melbourne were Lance Hardy and Sergio de Pieri and in Vienna, Anton Heiller. Whilst studying in Europe, Lawrence also attended summer schools with Marie-Claire Alain and Luigi Tagliavini.

Douglas Lawrence is Master of the Chapel Music at Ormond College within the University of Melbourne and Director of Music and Principal Organist to The Scots' Church.

Lawrence's international career began in 1970 with a concert on the oldest playable organ in the world, the organ in Sion, Switzerland. Since then, with annual concert tours, he has played in most of the western world, Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong and Manila and given over 2,500 performances as organist, harpsichordist or conductor.

Lawrence performs a vast range of music and has given more first performances than he cares to remember. He has made many vinyl records and CDs both as soloist, with



harpsichordist Elizabeth Anderson and with the choirs of Ormond College and The Scots' Church.

Douglas Lawrence is also Director of the Australian Baroque ensemble, a sessional lecturer for the United Faculty of Theology and teaches organ at the University of Melbourne. The Australian Government has honoured him for his services to music.

CREDITS

Recording venue:
The Scots' Church,
Melbourne

Recording dates: between
April 2000 and May 2001

Recording engineer:
Martin Wright

Digital editing:
Vaughan McAlley

Photos of Douglas Lawrence:
Howard Birnstihl

Photos of church interior:
Brian Hatfield

Photos of organ construction:
Alf Miller

Plaque: signatures of the
Rieger Organ builders

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