



Percy Whitlock Organ Sonata

Lynnwood Farnam Toccata on 'O filii et filiae', Fela Sowande Kyrie

Percy Grainger Blithe Bells



—...— Darius Battiwalla —...—

JJ Binns organ of Rochdale Town Hall



Track listing

1) Toccata on 'O filii et filiaë' - Lynnwood Farnam (1885-1930)	1:50
Organ Sonata in C minor - Percy Whitlock (1903-1946)	
2) I Grave - Allegro	13:47
3) II Canzona	6:17
4) III Scherzetto	4:33
5) IV Choral	20:15
6) Kyrie - Fela Sowande (1905-1987)	12:45
7) Blithe Bells - Percy Grainger (1882-1961), based on J.S. Bach	4:20
Total time	63:52



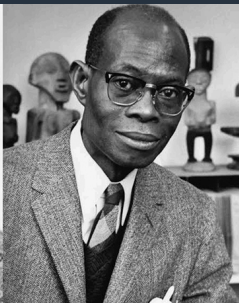
The Toccata on O Filii et Filiae is the only composition of the American organ virtuoso Lynnwood Farnam (1885-1930). A legendary international performer, Farnam is said to have composed this piece in order to try out unfamiliar organs when on concert tours. With the slow theme in the pedals and the continuous rapid manual figurations, on full organ throughout, it would certainly be a test of an instrument's action and wind supply – not to mention the technique of the player. It remained unpublished until after his death.



Lynnwood Farnam



Percy Whitlock



Fela Sowande



Percy Grainger

Now rightly regarded as one of the pinnacles of the English organ repertoire, Whitlock's Sonata in C minor remained out of print, unrecorded and virtually forgotten for over thirty years after his death. His reputation survived among church organists as a composer of small pieces, but it was not until Graham Barber's premiere recording of the Sonata in 1978 that he became known for his large scale works – not only the Sonata, but the two Fantasie Chorals and his most ambitious work, the Symphony for Organ and Orchestra.

Whitlock's Sonata, like Elgar's work in the same genre, is a product of the concert hall rather than the cathedral organ-loft. This is a reflection of Whitlock's own career which by the mid-1930s saw him employed full time as organist of the Bournemouth Pavilion, where his duties ranged from working with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and a range of visiting conductors and composers, to playing and improvising light music for tea-dances. These various influences find expression in the four movements of the Sonata, and a clue to two of the chief influences can be found in the Greek cryptogram at the head of the manuscript. When decoded, this reads "On hearing the Second Rachmaninov in Spring", which refers to the huge impression made on Whitlock by a broadcast of Rachmaninov's Second Symphony which he heard in 1934, and also to Frederick Delius, who died in the same year. It is in the outer movements of the Sonata that the influence of these two is most strongly felt. The first movement, which displays a sophisticated handling of sonata form rarely found in the organ repertoire, is clearly inspired by Rachmaninov in its surging and appassionato first subject, and its lyrical chromatic second subject. The three-chord fanfare heard at the outset returns to mark key moments in the structure, and the pianissimo introduction to the second subject returns in grand Elgarian manner at the movement's two great climaxes. The second movement, Canzona, is in a simpler harmonic style, recalling the songs of Bridge or Quilter, while the Scherzetto, with its constantly changing metre and jazzy harmonies, shows Whitlock's affinity with the British light music tradition. The final movement, Choral, is the longest, and gives a sense of Whitlock's skills as an improviser. The chorale-like theme, which is heard complete at the outset, recurs – fragmented and transformed – throughout the movement, which is by turns lyrical, dramatic and playful. Themes from earlier movements reappear before the final full statement of the main theme builds to a triumphant conclusion and the movement fades away in a peaceful coda. Whitlock gave the first performance of the Sonata at the West London Synagogue in 1938, just eight years before his death from tuberculosis at the age of 42.





Darius Battivalla. Photo: Justin Slee

Main case of the organ.
Photo: Jake Purches





Fela Sowande's musical career was remarkable for its high level of achievement in many different musical fields. Born in Lagos in 1905, the son of a priest, he was a chorister at the cathedral in Lagos where he also began his studies on the organ. He came to London in the mid-1930s, working as a church choirmaster and organist, and becoming bandleader and Hammond organist at the Florida Club in Mayfair – where he played duets with Fats Waller and recorded with Adelaide Hall and Vera Lynn. Studying the organ privately with some of London's leading players, he took his Fellowship examination for the Royal College of Organists, winning several prizes, before becoming organist at Kingsway Hall. He also worked as music advisor for the Ministry of Information during the war, providing background music for films. After the war he returned to Nigeria as first Head of Music for the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, where he founded the NBC choir and orchestra – eventually being awarded an MBE for his services. He visited the USA many times, including an appearance conducting the New York Philharmonic in his African Folk Symphony, which had been commissioned in 1960 to celebrate Nigerian independence.

He eventually moved to the USA and became a citizen, pursuing extensive research into Nigerian music and holding academic positions at many different universities. He died in Ohio in 1987.

The Kyrie is one of Sowande's most substantial organ works, and like many of the others uses a Yoruba Christian theme, in this case on the Ten Commandments. It is first heard about a minute into the piece and then appears either in fragments or as counterpoint to the other musical material, though it is not heard complete until the coda. The piece reflects Sowande's recurring interest in integrating traditional music with European musical forms – in this case the fugues which comprise two major sections of the piece.





Photo - kind permission of Rochdale Town Hall

It is clear from Sowande's own recorded performances that he did not regard contrapuntal music as dry and academic – he performs the first of the fugal sections of this piece with a high degree of rhythmic flexibility to give an effect of great emotional intensity. After the second fugal section, based on a lively chromatic theme, the complete Kyrie is heard and the harmonies become more modal as the music fades away.

Percy Grainger's subtitle for Blithe Bells, "a free ramble on Bach's Aria: Sheep may safely graze", is an apt description of a work which is far more than a mere arrangement. Taking one of Bach's best known pieces, an extract from the secular cantata *Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd*, Grainger takes the thirds in the main theme as a representation of sheep-bells and treats it with his typical chromatic harmony and textural variety. By turns dramatic and dreamlike, it regains something of the simplicity of the original by the end. As was his custom, Grainger made many different scorings of this piece; this organ arrangement is based on Grainger's two-piano version.



Inscribed on the plaque above the console is the following:

**This organ was presented to the Corporation by
Alderman Sir Samuel Turner JP and was formally declared
open by the donor on the occasion of the visit of their
Majesties King George V and Queen Mary to the Town
on 9th July 1913.**



Rochdale Town Hall was opened in 1871 with provision for an organ to fill the three arches in the Great Hall. J. J. Binns of Bramley, Leeds was the chosen builder; Sir Samuel's place of worship, the former Baillie Street Methodist Church, had a large instrument by Binns and this may have influenced his choice. The delay in installation until 1913 meant that the organ was both technically and tonally advanced for its time with the then latest tubular pneumatic action and combination system. The first recital was given by Herbert Walton, then Organist of Glasgow Cathedral. During the 1970s it was apparent that a major rebuild and update would be needed. The Town Hall Organ Restoration (THOR) group was set up and raised modest funds, attracting the interest of the Carnegie UK Trust. This trust, together with Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council jointly and generously donated large sums which saw a complete rebuild being completed by J. W. Walker & Sons Ltd in 1978-9. A new electro-pneumatic action was installed together with a full complement of playing aids. The keyboards were inclined and a humidifier was added to protect the windchests.

The instrument was re-opened on 1 December 1979 with a joint recital by Dr Gilbert Kennedy and Wayne Marshall. A large audience headed by the Mayor of Rochdale was present.

This concert organ has many orchestral stops together with robust and complete flue and reed choruses. The sound of "FULL ORGAN" underpinned by a majestic Pedal Division complements the grandeur of the magnificent Great Hall. The organ never fails to elicit the highest praise from visiting players; the tonal projection into the hall is absolute and unhindered. The voicing reflects, in part, the work of the German organ builder, Schulze, of whom Binns was an admirer.



Mr Frank Greenwood B. Mus FRCO ARMC was the appointed Borough Organist until 1935. Since then, and currently, professional players have been engaged by the local Organists' Association to give regular recitals. The late Mr Harvey Smith, the excellent organist of the Rochdale Methodist Mission based at the Champness Hall nearby, took part in these recitals in earlier days. With the advent of the Brereton Memorial Fund, the organ bench was also rebuilt and fitted with an adjustable mechanism.

In conclusion, it is appropriate to quote an extract from the I.A.O. Members Information Guide concerning the Rochdale instrument "The organ is really thrilling and the acoustic setting impressive. It is well worth travelling quite some distance for the experience."

A. M. Wilson



Alan M. Wilson (1927 - 2019) was a former President and senior committee member of the Oldham, Rochdale & Tameside Organists' Association (ORTOA), who for forty years has had the brief for liaison with Rochdale Council and the organ builder Andrew Carter regarding the upkeep of the Binns organ.

Apart from his vast knowledge of organists and instruments in the area, he regularly played the town hall instrument for the weekly tours of the building till 2019 and had played a pivotal role in the campaign in the 1970s which successfully brought about a rebuild by J. W. Walker & Son in 1979



James J. Binns



JAMES J. BINNS



Organ in St. John's Church, Leeds.

BRAMLEY ORGAN WORKS :: LEEDS.

Town Hall
Rochdale

No 352

**Grand Concert to commemorate
the Restoration of the
Town Hall Organ**

Saturday, 8th December 1979

7.00 for 7.30 p.m

Tickets £1.00 (50p OAP/Child)

Tickets cannot be exchanged or money refunded

Town Hall — Rochdale
SATURDAY 8 DECEMBER

GRAND CONCERT

to
COMMEMORATE
THE RESTORATION OF THE
TOWN HALL ORGAN

**Dr Gilbert Kennedy
Wayne Marshall**

OULDER HILL SCHOOL CHOIR
ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN YOUTH BAND

Reception 7 pm × Concert 7.30 pm

ADMISSION £1.00 × OAP/CHILD 50p

Tickets from: Bradleys Records, Yorkshire Street,
Rochdale and Heywood and Middleton Civic Halls

Darius Battiwalla between
takes during the recording.
Photo: Jake Purches





THIS
WAS PRESENTED TO THE CORPORATION BY
ALDERMAN SIR SAMUEL TURNER, J.P.
AND WAS FORMALLY DECLARED OPEN BY
DONOR ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT BY THE
MAJESTIES KING GEORGE V AND QUEEN MARY
TO THE TOWN ON THE 30th JULY 1905

Darius Battiwalla has recently been appointed Leeds City Organist, organising and performing regularly in the highly successful recital series in Leeds Town Hall, and has given organ recitals at cathedrals and concert halls throughout the country and abroad, as well as recordings and radio broadcasts. He has given the recitals for the Royal College of Organists' and Incorporated Association of Organists' annual congress, and appeared as soloist with the BBC Philharmonic, CBSO and Halle orchestras. Recent projects include the premiere with the Black Dyke Band of a new work composed for organ and brass band, a performance of Karl Jenkins' organ concerto in Manchester, solo concerts in Leeds, York, London and Moscow and a live BBC broadcast of Janacek's Glagolitic Mass. He also has an interest in improvisation, having taught organ and improvisation for many years at the RNCM in Manchester, and improvises for silent films on both organ and piano, including regular appearances at the National Media Museum and Leeds International Film Festival.

Darius is also a choral conductor and arranger, having had arrangements performed by the LSO, Halle, RLPO and other leading orchestras, and has had arrangements commissioned by the Black Dyke Band, Huddersfield Choral Society and the BBC. As a choral conductor he has prepared choirs for leading orchestras and conductors both in the UK and abroad.

Darius was born in London and started playing the piano at an early age, before taking up the cello and then the organ. He was educated at Leeds University and the Royal Northern College of Music where he won prizes for both organ and piano accompaniment.





Rochdale Town Hall,
Greater Manchester.
Photo: Jake Purches





ORGAN SPECIFICATION

The Organ of Rochdale Town Hall,

J. J. Binns, 1913

rebuilt J. W. Walker & Sons Ltd, 1979

PEDAL ORGAN - 10 stops - 175 pipes

1. Double Open Diapason 32'
2. Great Bass 16'
3. Violone 16'
4. Bourdon 16'
5. Echo Bourdon 16' (from 33.)
6. Flute Bass 8' (from 4.)
7. Violoncello 8' (from 3.)
8. Octave Bass 8' (from 2.)
9. Trombone 16'
10. Tromba 8' (from 9.)

CHOIR ORGAN - 9 stops - 537 pipes

(Enclosed)

11. Lieblich Bourdon 16'
12. Geigen Diapason 8'
13. Lieblich Gedact 8'
14. Aeoline 8'
15. Unda Maris 8' (ten. C)
16. Flauto Traverso 4'
17. Flautina 2'
18. Clarionet 8'
19. Vox Humana 8'
- Tremulant - Octave - Sub Octave

GREAT ORGAN - 13 stops - 915 pipes

20. Double Open Diapason 16'
21. Large Open Diapason 8'
22. Medium Open Diapason 8'
23. Small Open Diapason 8'
24. Hohl Flute 8'
25. Dulciana 8'
26. Flute Harmonic 4'
27. Octave 4'
28. Octave Quint 2 2/3'
29. Super Octave 2'
30. Full Mixture III (15.19.22)
31. Trumpet 8'
32. Clarion 4'

SWELL ORGAN - 14 stops - 964 pipes

(Enclosed)

33. Lieblich Bourdon 16'
34. Open Diapason 8'
35. Rohr Flute 8'
36. Viol d'Orchestre 8'
37. Vox Angelica 8'
38. Voix Celestes 8' (ten. C)
39. Suabe Flute 4'
40. Salicet 4'
41. Piccolo 2'
42. Mixture III (15.19.22.)
43. Contra Fagotta 16'
44. Horn 8'
45. Oboe 8'
46. Clarion 4'
- Tremulant - Octave - Sub Octave



SOLO ORGAN - 7 stops - 427 pipes
(enclosed except 53. TUBA)

47. Violin & Cello 8'
48. Flute Orchestral 8'
49. Flute Orchestral 4'
50. Piccolo Orchestral 2'
51. Oboe Orchestral 2'
52. Corno di basso 2'
Tremulant
53. Tuba 8' (on 10in wind)
Octave - Sub Octave

ACCESSORIES (1979 rebuild):

Thumb Pistons: 6 each to Choir, Great,
Swell & Solo
6 General Pistons
Reversibles for Ch/Ped, Gt/Ped, Sw/Ped, So/Ped, Sw/
Ch, So/Ch,
Ch/Gt, Sw/Gt, So/Gt, So/Sw, Pedal Trombone
General Cancel, Capture Set with Lock Switch
Toe Pistons: 6 each to Pedal & Swell
Reversibles for Gt/Ped, Sw/Gt, Pedal Trombone
Balanced Expression Pedals for the Choir,
Swell & Solo Organs

COUPLERS

Solo to Swell
Solo to Great Octave
Solo to Great
Solo to Great Sub Octave
Solo to Choir
Swell to Great Octave
Swell to Great Unison
Swell to Great Sub Octave

Choir to Great
Swell to Choir
Solo to Pedal
Swell to Pedal
Great to Pedal
Choir to Pedal

Combination Couplers:

Gt. & Pedal pistons
coupled (drawstop)

Man. Compass: 61 notes

Ped. Compass: 30 notes

53 sounding stops

3,018 pipes

Great: 915 pipes

Swell: 964 pipes

Choir: 537 pipes

Solo: 427 pipes

Pedal: 175 pipes

Original 1913 Accessories:

3 Interchangeable Pistons to Gt. & Pedal organs
1 fixed piston giving full Gt. & Pedal organs
3 Interchangeable Pistons to Swell organ
1 fixed piston giving full Swell organ
3 Interchangeable Pistons to Choir organ
3 Interchangeable Pistons to Solo organ
8 Combination Pedals duplicating Gt. & Sw, Pistons
Double acting Pedal for "Great to Pedal"
Double acting Pedal for "Swell to Great"





CREDITS:

Producer, recording engineer, mixing and online editing: Jake Purches

With assistance from Darius Battiwalla

Recording assistant: Etienne Purches

Page turning: Hannah Dyson

Location assistance at Rochdale Town Hall: Luke Settle

Recording location: Rochdale Town Hall, Rochdale, Greater Manchester, England

Date: 3-4 September 2020

Album notes: Darius Battiwalla, Jake Purches, Alan M. Wilson

Proof reading: Dr Roland Harris

Mastering: CD and DSD 5.1 surround SACD: Bastiaan Kuijt

Graphic design: Gary Marsh marshgraphicdesign.com

Painting of the opening of the hall in 1871, before the organ was built.
Courtesy of Rochdale Town Hall.



Mix and mastered on Vivid Audio Giya G1 and B1 Oval loudspeakers with custom Vivid subwoofer system at Six Audio. Thanks to Ray Rowles and Laurence Dickie
www.sixaudio.co.uk www.vividaudio.com

Thank you to our sponsor, Peter Allison, for his gracious support in making this recording possible. This recording was made in memory of his father and best friend Derek Allison.

Thank you to Darius Battiwalla for his enthusiasm for this project, Hannah Dyson, Dr Roland Harris, Gary Marsh, Jelita Purches, Luke Settle and the crew of Rochdale Town Hall and Wayne Marshall for their assistance and help in the making of this recording.

© Jake Purches Base2 Music 2021

A Jake Purches Base2 Music production. Email base2musique@gmail.com
Webshop at www.base2music.store for our other SACD, DSD and FLAC download releases

An audiophile quality/high dynamic range production recorded at 384 kHz 24 bit 5.1 channel and stereo sound.

Recorded using Sennheiser MKH8020 omni microphones in a pentagonal formation for true five-channel surround sound.

All channels are full range. Subwoofer channel derived from the centre channel omni microphone and is active and optional down to the lowest fundamental – CCC at 16.3 Hz.

Surround tracks can also be listened to in 'quad' if no centre channel is present.





Photo: Jake Purches

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

OULDER HILL SCHOOL CHOIR

(Conductor : David Roberts) :

Hava Nageela	arr. Goldman
There is sweet music here	Clements
Bright Eyes	arr. Roberts
Cavantina	arr. Roberts
The Wedding Ring	Russell-Smith
(Soloist : Belinda Bleakley).	

•

GILBERT KENNEDY :

Prelude and Fugue in G	Johann Nikolaus Bach
Two Noels :	
(i) Fantaisie sur " Une jeune fillette "	Eustache du Caurroy
(ii) Les Bourgers de Chatre	Nicholas de Lebeque
A Trumpet Voluntary	Jeremiah Clarke

•

ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN YOUTH BAND (Conductor : John Siswick) :

March - Medallion	Langford
Men of Harlech	Langford
Sweet Gingerbread Man	Langford

•

WAYNE MARSHALL :

Fanfare	John Cook
Pastorale in E	Cesar Franck
Toccata and Fugue in D. Minor (BWV 565)	J. S. Bach

INTERVAL — 15 minutes

WAYNE MARSHALL :

Carillon Sortie	Henri Mulet
Scherzo	Enrico Bossi
Tuba Tune	Norman Cocker
Berceuse	Louis Vierne
Prelude and Fugue in B. Major	Marcel Dupré

•

ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN YOUTH BAND :

Spanish Gypsy Dance	Marquini
Traditional Hoot Nanny	Waters

•

GILBERT KENNEDY :

Grande Fantaisie	Lefebure-Wély
Variations on a Theme (for Pedals alone)	Garth Kay
(Church Organ) Blues	Thomas (Fats) Waller
Toccata : " Spes Salutis "	Gilbert Kennedy

•

Brief address by

THE MAYOR
(Councillor Harold Stanley)

Jerusalem	William Blake
-----------------	---------------

- And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green ?
And was the holy lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen ?
And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills ?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark satanic mills ?
- Bring me my bow of burning gold !
Bring me my arrows of desire !
Bring me my spear ! O clouds, unfold !
Bring me my chariot of fire !
I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

Original 1979 Grand concert programme to commemorate the restoration of the organ of Rochdale Town Hall.

Programme image courtesy of Wayne Marshall.

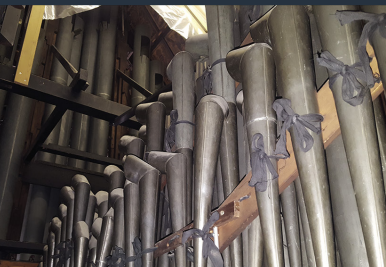


Photo. of **BRAMLEY ORGAN WORKS, LEEDS.** Showing two sides of Factory.

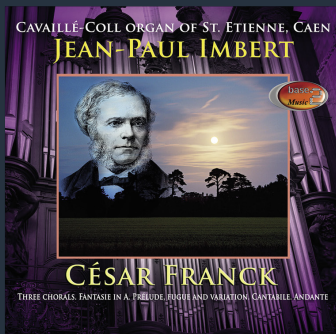
Bramley Organ Works, Leeds.







Other titles in SACD stereo & surround sound from Base2 Music
www.base2music.store



I founded Base2 music in 2016 initially as a collaboration with Vivid Audio Loudspeakers and Laurence Dickie, with which I have been associated since my days at Bowers and Wilkins over 30 years ago. The idea was to 'close the loop' by producing a recording that was entirely controlled from the microphone to the loudspeaker. The result of which was my first SACD release, an album of music by César Franck, with the celebrated French organist Jean-Paul Imbert. I had heard Imbert play 20 years ago and wanted very much to work with him. The success of this release prompted a follow-up album with Professor Imbert, "Passacaglia" and this lead to other exciting projects with organist and conductor Wayne Marshall then Egor Kolesov and Jean-Marie Fritz with Mi Ja Kim which brings me to this SACD disc, the excellent 'Leeds city organist' Darius Battiwalla.

This project was made possible by the generous sponsorship of Mr Peter Allison, who introduced me to Darius Battiwalla, and asked if we could make this disc in memory of his Father Derek Allison. The theme of this disc was quickly set. After hearing the Toccata by Lynnwood Farnam, I managed to obtain a score from my friend Alberto Pedretti in Italy. Darius quickly memorised it, and its tremendous scalar energy opens the programme with a bang.

The main 45-minute piece is the title of the disc - the Sonata in C minor by Percy Whitlock. Excerpts from the sonata are quite commonly played but to hear it in recorded form in its entirety is unusual. So we have all 4 parts of this fine work, composed when Whitlock was 36 years old. Whitlock's contemporary Fela Sowande from Nigeria was an inspired choice by Darius. Not least as the J. J. Binns organ of Rochdale is very similar to the Binns organ Sowande used at Kingsway Hall for the first recital of his 'Kyrie'. For our recording of the 'Kyrie', Sowande calls for the 32 ft double open diapasons on the opening first bars that descend to 16 Hz causing windows in the hall to rattle. With the judicious placing of heavy boxes up tall ladders on the offending resonators, we managed to capture the bass line without the unsympathetic windows! The recording finishes with a delightful organ transcription by Darius of a Bach Aria by Percy Grainger, a friend of Delius, who influenced Whitlock in this Sonata, in some ways rounds the circle to this recording.

I used a pentangle layout for capturing surround stereo sound. Three omnidirectional microphones are at the front capturing the organ on a large high reach mast with the two rear Omni microphones about 16 metres behind the main mast capturing the acoustics of the hall. The Yamaha 12 channel analogue to digital converter was running at 384 kHz 24-bit DXD format, and after mixing, was converted to DSD and CD audio by Grammy award-winning mastering engineer Bastiaan Kuijt, yielding a superbly smooth sound.

Text - Jake Purches, Producer





Percy Whitlock (1903-1946)

© © Jake Purches Base2 Music 2021
Base2 Music
Unit 6 Star Road
Partridge Green
RH13 8RA UK
email base2music@gmail.com
www.base2music.store