

200-year-old concerto's church performance

The first known performance of a concerto, written 200 years ago, is to be given at St Mary's Church, Tadley, tomorrow at 7.30 pm. It is a concerto for harpsichord or pianoforte with accompaniments for two violins and a violincello by William Smethergell, born in 1750 - the year John Sebastian Bach died.

The performance will be given by the Redlands Trio - Charlotte Hillier, Marie Horseman and Alastair Wilson - all music students at Reading

University - with the St Mary's Church organist, Timothy Rishton, at the piano.

The trio will also play *Divertimento No. 2 in B flat K229*, by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Unique

The rest of the programme consists of organ music played by Timothy Rishton, with works by Buxtehude, Ernst and Bach. Among those present will be Philip Wells who built the remodelled organ, with many additions, to

make it quite a unique instrument.

The concert is part of the 26th anniversary celebrations of the formation of the parish of St Mary's, North Tadley.

The celebrations continue on Sunday when, at a service at 11 am, the preacher is the Rev Alan Luff, precentor of Westminster Abbey - a former colleague of St Mary's Church vicar, the Rev Jack Talbot of Stretford, Manchester.

- Arthur Attwood

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Fascinating theme and beauty

Newbury Weekly News

Organ music revived

A RECITAL of three works from the great age of organ music was presented by Mr Tim Rishton at St. Mary's Church, Tadley recently. The three pieces, from the late 17th and 18th centuries, showed how organ music developed in that period.

The first, by Buxtehude, displayed the earlier style, with many self-contained sections contrasting undisciplined three style flourishes with short fugues, as in instrumental canzones.

Next, a piece by Prince Johann Ernst of Saxe Weimar, who died aged only 19, showed Vivaldi's influence, with one manual representing the orchestra and repeating the theme, while the other represented the soloist. Third was a sonata by Bach, in which the first and second violin parts were taken by the right and left hands, while the cello part was played on the pedals.

Also performing was the Redlands String Trio from Reading University, who joined Mr Rishton in the first known public performance of a work by the little known 18th century composer, William Smethergall.

By Athur Attwood

There are many hidden gems of music which have been consigned to obscurity for generations, like William Smethergell's *Concerto for Harpsichord or Pianoforte* with accompaniment for two violins and cello.

It was this composition, written in 1785, which aroused so much interest in St Mary's Church, Tadley, in one of the regular recitals. Those present must have been impressed by the sheer beauty of the work with its fascinating theme.

This was immaculately played on the piano by Mr Timothy Rishton, former organist of St Mary's Church, now working in Lancashire.

Three very talented instrumentalists from Reading University - Charlotte Hillier and Marie Horseman (violins), and Alastair Wilson (cello) - provided the accompaniment.

Earlier, the trio did real justice to Mozart's *Divertimento No. 2 in B flat, K229*.

theme, which kept recurring.

The middle part of the programme consisted of organ music with Timothy Rishton drawing out the very best from what is a remarkable instrument. Among those present was the builder, Mr Philip Wells, who had used pieces from several organs in its construction.

In some ways, the three works were very contrasting, although they had been included to show the development of the German style of organ music. Most impressive was Johann Sebastian Bach's *Trio Sonata in G Major*, played with great understanding and feeling.

Johann Ernst's *Concerto in C Major*, an imitation of Vivaldi, proved very exciting, it followed the more harsh approach of Dietrich Buxtehude's *Tocatta and Fugue in F Major*.

It was pleasing to find this musical event well attended.