

IN THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS

The season of Passiontide is traditionally a time to meditate on the events leading up to Jesus's Crucifixion, and this year is no exception. First, Sebastian Thomson presents four opportunities to reflect on *The 14 Stations of the Cross* as portrayed in music by John Hosking, with accompanying images by Sarah Foubert (see right). The composer says of his 2015 work, 'There is nothing pleasant about the Stations of the Cross; indeed, one must recall suffering, torture and grief throughout. My overall aim has been to depict each station as graphically and colourfully as possible, with a constant feeling of unsettlement and not quite knowing what will come next.' The work was written for the Angels of Creation project, in which Thomson has been commissioning new organ works from British composers. Thomson explains, 'I passionately believe in the importance of new music, especially for the organ, and recognised that many composers lack the opportunity to air their creative output. This drove me to commission, perform, publish and record the new works myself.' The project was launched seven years ago with David Bednall's *Rhapsody*, premiered in St Paul's Cathedral in 2010, followed by works by Simon Whalley, Thomas Hewitt Jones, and Neil Cox, Hosking's *Stations*, and Daniel Saleeb; a further work has just been commissioned from Owain Park.

Sebastian Thomson performs *The 14 Stations of the Cross* in Bradford Cathedral (22 Mar), Bristol Cathedral (see below), Westminster Cathedral (9 Apr), and St Andrew's, Wiverlcombe (12 Apr). More details from his website: bit.ly/2iSTvMT.

In a different musical interpretation of the route to Calvary, during Holy Week David Dunnett plays Dupré's *Le chemin de la croix* in Norwich Cathedral (11 Apr); and on Passion Sunday, Peter Holder anticipates Good Friday with a performance of Tournemire's *The Seven Last Words of Christ*, accompanied by readings (2 Apr, St Paul's Cathedral, London).

